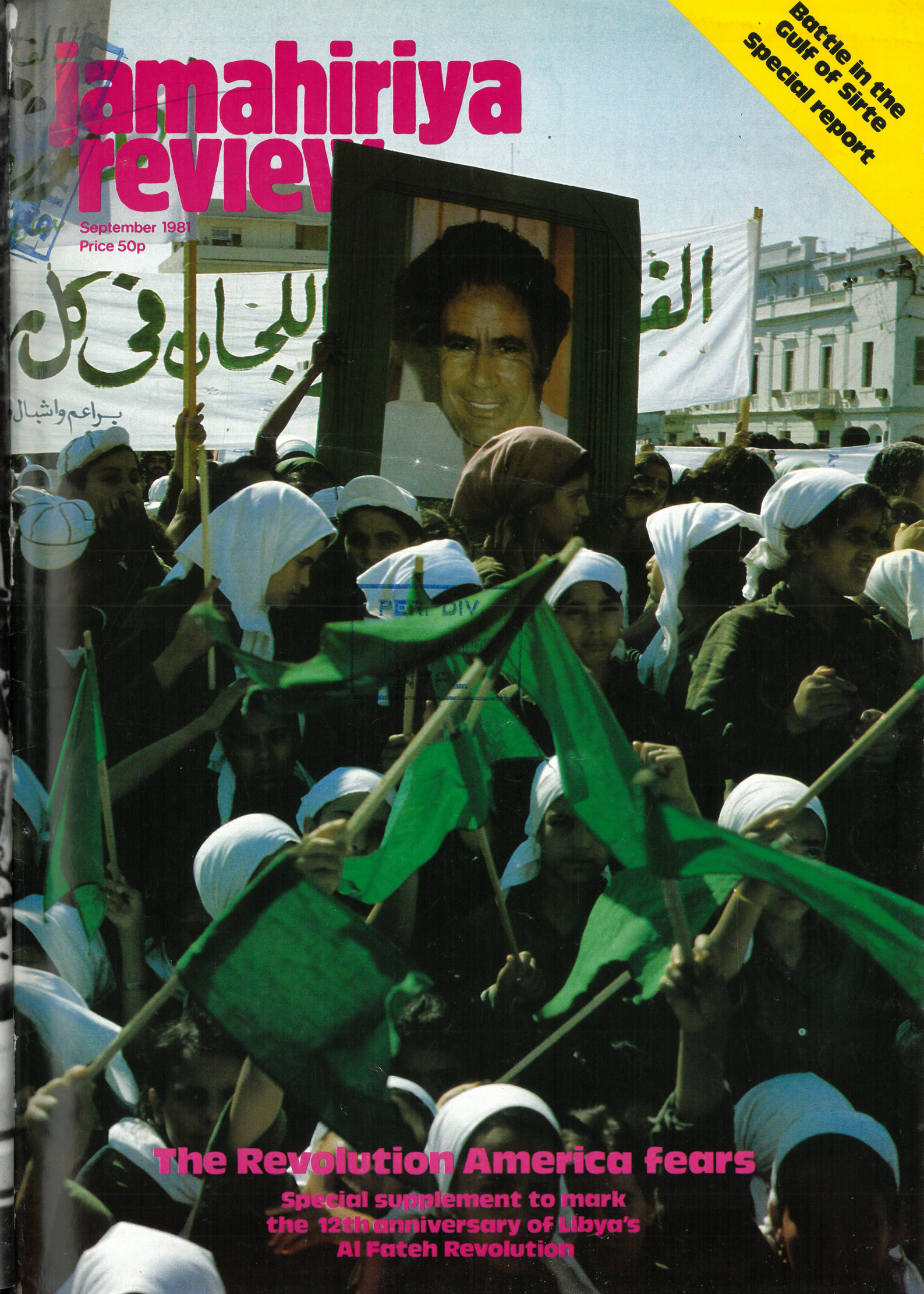




Also in this issue:

Israel and Egypt plan Libya attack
OAU summit report and comment
Tripoli's Tuesday Market sets the style
Sadat's political crackdown
Cyprus: The search for national unity
The American arms that kill the Arabs



jamahiriya review

September 1981
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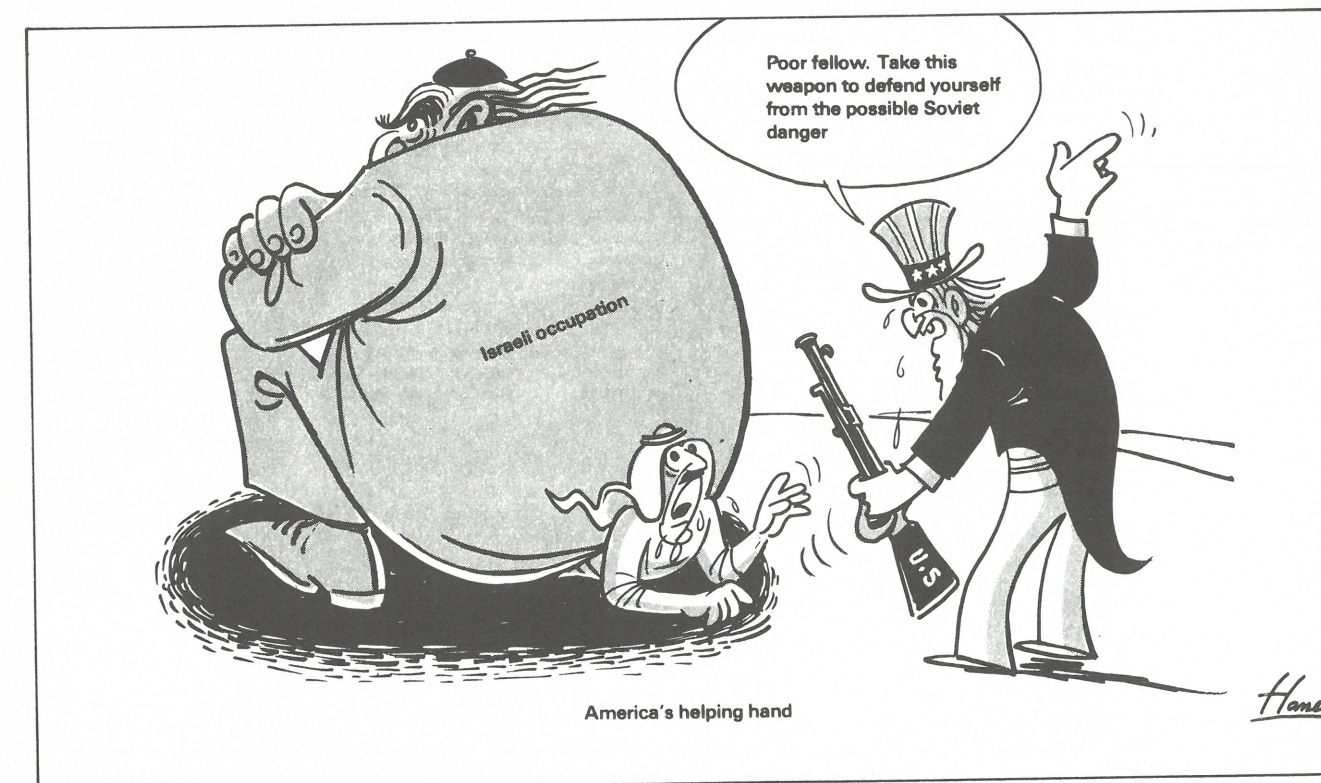
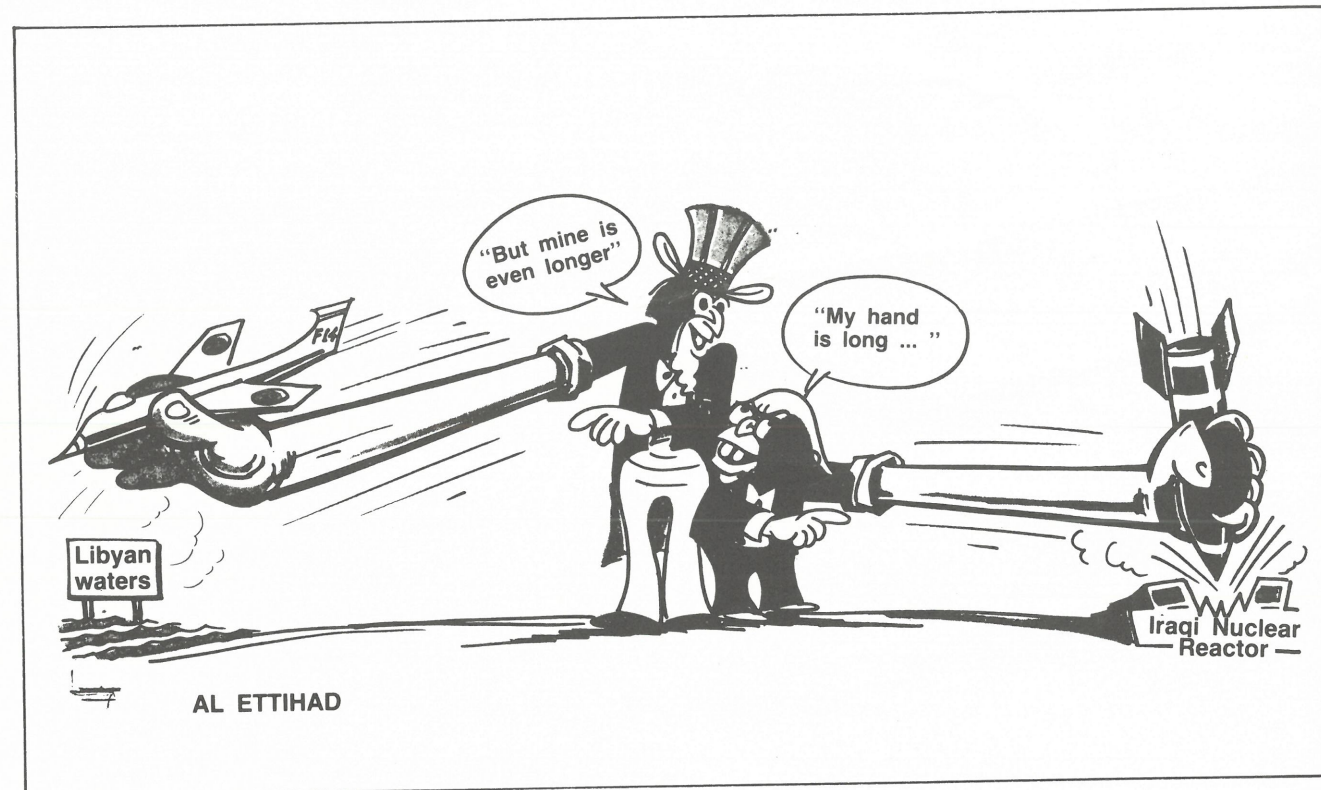
الليبية
براعم واشبال

Battle in the
Gulf of Sirte
Special report

The Revolution America fears

Special supplement to mark
the 12th anniversary of Libya's
Al Fateh Revolution

Cartoon Comments



jamahiriya review

Issue No 16 September 1981

TWO LIBYAN Jets were shot down by American planes in Libyan airspace above the Gulf of Sirte, part of Libya's territorial waters, on 19th August. The incident was provoked by US President Ronald Reagan as 'a direct challenge' — in the words of the US weekly Newsweek — to Libyan leader Muammer Qadhafi and his country. This naked aggression by the world's most powerful nation against a Third World country has been condemned by the OAU, the Gulf Co-operation Council, the Arab League, and by public opinion throughout the world, including British MPs. In this expanded issue, a News Feature starting on page 9 looks at the Gulf of Sirte incident and its ramifications. It includes, on page 13, a summary of the complex state of international law on the matter by Gerald Blake of Durham University.

THE POSITIVE aspect of the month's events is the celebration of the twelfth anniversary of Libya's September 1st Al Fateh Revolution. On page 18, we start a special supplement on the achievements of the Libyan Revolution, and especially why it is so feared by the super powers, and what it has meant for Libyans, bringing them social benefits and political freedom. 1981 saw the launch of the Libyan Jamahiriya's new \$62.5 billion five-year development plan. Contracts worth billions of dollars have already been awarded, and on page 22 Dr Alan George reviews some of the main features of the plan and the major developments of the past year.

THIS ISSUE also includes our regular round-ups of Libyan political, social and economic news. Panorama News Review starts on page 5, and Trade and Development News on page 26.

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Washington resorts to lies to conceal the truth

WITH CHARACTERISTIC clarity the Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi responded to the American aggression on 19th August in the Gulf of Sirte by pointing out that the incident was not provoked by Washington over the issue of territorial waters; it was a cover for a wider scheme aimed at the destabilisation of the Libyan Jamahiriya and a prelude to the American scheme to overthrow the authorities loyal to Qadhafi.

Throughout the incident the story told by the Reagan administration has been based on a series of half-truths, outright lies, and a cover-up of the real motives. Clearly, when Reagan arrived in Washington integrity and truth became virtues not to be tolerated. President Reagan is entitled to reject everything for which the Libyan revolution stands. It is a challenge to almost every value of exploitation and oppression on which the United States has forged itself as a major military power in the world. But military might is a very far thing from being morally right.

The election of the Reagan administration signalled the start of a major campaign to re-assert United States' influence and control over world affairs. Unable to secure friends and allies in the international community through mutual respect, Washington recognises that its influence can only be asserted through military interference and covert action to destabilise regimes opposed to the United States' economic and political control over world affairs.

Libya's important question at the centre of Arab rejection of US policies in the region, and its determined stand against submission to Zionist claims in Palestine, make the Jamahiriya a clear target. A country like Libya, which has the economic resources and strength not to be dependent on the United States directly or indirectly through the US controlled international monetary system, cannot be forced to acquiesce to American influence and control. Moreover, the Jamahiriya can give financial support to other countries which seek to break free from US domination.

It is only by fully recognising the important role which revolutionary Libya plays, in frustrating American aspirations to exert a firm control over the Arab nation, that the Gulf of Sirte incident can be understood. And the incident itself is part of a much wider scheme whose eventual aim is to overthrow the authorities loyal to Qadhafi and re-assert US control over Libya through a compliant and subservient regime led by a surrogate ruler.

This does not mean that the Americans are right in claiming that Libya is under Soviet control. True as it might be that Libya looks to Moscow for the arms with which to defend itself from American military threats, and however great is the identity of views between the Soviet Union and Libya on American foreign policy, this should not be confused with an identity of ideology or politics. The Jamahiriya's guiding principle in foreign affairs is 'positive non-alignment' which is manifested in Libya's call for all foreign military fleets and bases to be removed from the Mediterranean region and the Arab homeland. If the Americans' concern in the Middle East were genuinely a matter of rival Soviet influence, then it would be logical for Washington to back Libya in its call. But America's intentions are far less honourable.

A key focal point of American foreign policy under Reagan has been to exert control over the Arab homeland. Although Reagan and Haig have sought to gain entry into the region by claiming a Soviet threat to the Arab nation, the real intention is to secure a presence to allow the US to exercise influence and control and to subvert the Arabs' independence to determine their own political and economic policies. Even the most conservative Arab regimes point out that Israel (and

by implication the United States) is a far greater threat to the security of the Middle East than the Soviet Union.

The incident in the Gulf of Sirte was itself surrounded by American half-truths and fantasies to justify the Sixth Fleet's actions. 'Wholly unexpected and unprovoked' claimed Washington, but later it was widely reported and accepted not only that the whole affair had been carefully planned in Washington, but at the highest levels including sanction by Reagan himself. To back its case, Washington asserted that Libya claimed 200 miles for its territorial waters, only later for the Pentagon to admit that Libya only claims a 12 mile limit and the waters of the Gulf of Sirte. The US pointed out that it had given due notice of the area designated for the exercise, only for the Sixth Fleet commander subsequently to admit (although it was hardly reported) that the incident occurred outside the manoeuvres area. It was 60 miles off the Libyan coast said the Americans, steadfastly ignoring that it was within the Gulf of Sirte, an integral part of Libyan territory — and then the Sixth Fleet commander confessed immediately prior to the incident, US planes had penetrated Libyan airspace to within 24 miles of the coast.

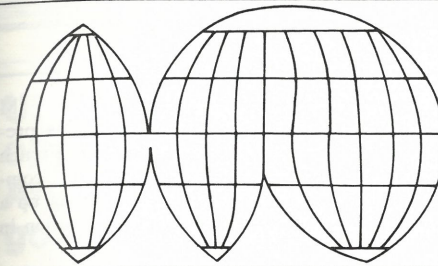
And all this still leaves the question as to what place this 'incident' has within the overall US scheme to overthrow Qadhafi. And what are the wider implications on the global scale.

Set against the background of the persistent and virulent propaganda campaign against Libya and Qadhafi over the past year or so, which so conveniently provided the press with a catalogue of justification for US antipathy to Libya (wholly ignoring that much of that catalogue of unsubstantiated claims of Libya's massive international capability to mastermind every political disturbance from the Philippines to Northern Ireland, and twice round the globe again covering both northern and southern hemispheres, is itself part of the CIA scheme to isolate and destabilise Libya), no doubt the incident will soon be used to justify some further action against Libya. Having set American public opinion on a high of militaristic fervour, what voices will be raised should Sadat act on his instructions from Washington to invade the Jamahiriya, thereby providing the pretext for a full-scale US invasion of Libya 'to defend its vital oil supplies'.

Nor should we ignore the wider implications. Reagan, by a puny one-minute war in the Gulf of Sirte has set the mood in the US for more military adventures and 'tough stands in defence of law, order and freedom'. The implications affect not simply the Arab nation; Europe is now being hard pressed by Washington to join the military build-up with cruise missiles and neutron bombs; South Africa now feels itself part of that American axis and confident that it can invade Angola with full support from the White House; in the same week as the Gulf of Sirte incident across the world in the Caribbean, come reports of Washington's plans for an invasion of Grenada, while further military supplies to the junta in El Salvador are announced in Washington.

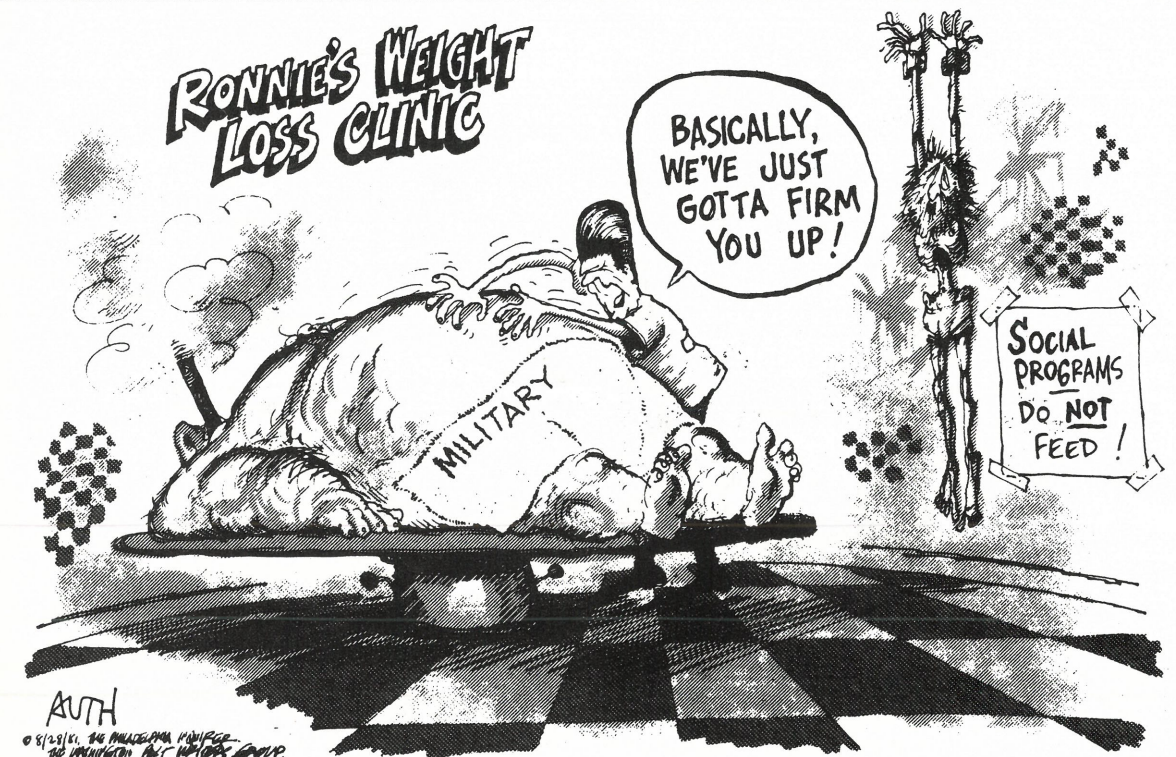
It would be foolish and short-sighted to see the aggression against the Libyan Jamahiriya out of the context of the rapid movement towards a full-scale global war. Since Washington now appears unable to see anything other than a military response to a political challenge, in a nuclear age the implications are far-reaching and affect us all.

Not least the effects will be felt in Europe. The Americans, being no fools when it comes to self-preservation, have conveniently ensured that the theatre of war in the event of an East-West confrontation will be in Europe. America might press the button, but Europe will feel the explosion and the response. Europeans ignore the mentality behind the American aggression on Libya at their own peril.



PANORAMA

news review



1st September celebrations held in Libya

IN A firm and defiant speech before thousands of Libyans in Tripoli's Green Square on 1st September, Muammar Qadhafi warned that while Libya will work for peace and security in the world, this cannot be at the expense of the freedom of the Jamahiriya or other Third World nations. If the military threats from the United States continue, the Libyan leader told a rally marking the twelfth anniversary of the Al Fateh Revolution, then the Jamahiriya will have to seek alliances with its friends which could alter the course of events in the Mediterranean, if not the whole world. By her aggressive actions, the United States is forcing Libya to reconsider the most treasured of the Revolution's principles — the commitment to positive non-alignment.

After the US attack in the Gulf of Sirte and the reported plans for American action in Libya, 'there is neither a possibility nor any use in coming to an understanding with the US government,' Qadhafi said. 'We have tried all

cordial and peaceful methods to no avail. We went to all states and asked them to mediate with the USA, so that we could have normal relations with the US; we wanted to have diplomatic relations with the US; and if there was any room for mutual interests, then we welcome it. But the US is insisting that there should be no room for relations as long as there is a revolution in Libya.'

Qadhafi then urged the countries in the Mediterranean which host American military bases to recognise the implications of their actions. 'The US, which is playing with fire, will cause a disaster for these people. We warn all the peoples of the Mediterranean that if the US attacks us in the Gulf of Sirte, we shall deliberately attack nuclear missiles and bases. If the US bases in Western Europe and the Mediterranean countries take part in this attack, it will be our right, in self-defence to attack these bases if we have the military means to reach them.'

And there were other consequences of American actions against Libya. Muammar Qadhafi continued, 'We have adhered to positive neutrality; we hope to remain in positive neutrality and non-alignment, and to consolidate and strengthen it.' He added that Libya remains committed to the

ideals of non-alignment, but this was only possible 'without pressure and challenges' from the United States.

'We do not look for axes or for war,' Qadhafi continued, 'but the United States has reached an extent which is making us reconsider our neutrality.'

'Our existence is more important than our neutrality,' the Libyan leader declared. He went on to survey the implications of a major shift in the Jamahiriya's alignment; 'Libya is in possession of 2,000 km along the Mediterranean shores; the longest coast in the Mediterranean. Therefore, if Libya was forced to change its position, the course of events in the Mediterranean region at least would change, if not the whole world.'

He added, 'The United States will be sorry when it is too late, because the Americans will inevitably be the losers.'

The American response to Qadhafi's speech will undoubtedly concern governments in western Europe. According to press reports, the United States has said that in the event of a confrontation with Libya, America will expect to strengthen its position with forces from within the NATO alliance.

Qadhafi tours Arab capitals

THE LIBYAN leader Muammar Qadhafi embarked on a tour of Arab capitals during late August, immediately following his visits to Aden and Addis Ababa for the signing of a tripartite agreement between Libya, Democratic Yemen and Ethiopia during which the American attack on two Libyan reconnaissance planes occurred.

He arrived first in Abu Dhabi for talks with President Sheikh Zayed of the United Arab Emirates. The warm welcome given to the Libyan revolutionary leader, by a Gulf state considered by Washington as pro-western in its approach to politics, took the United States by surprise. However, in recent years Libya has found a firm friend in Sheikh Zayed, one of the most respected Gulf leaders. Two years ago, when Sheikh Zayed attended the 1st September celebrations in Benghazi to mark the anniversary of Libya's Al Fateh Revolution, Muammar Qadhafi made special reference to the efforts of the Emirates' leader in support of Arab unity and the Arab cause.

As *Reuters* commented, 'Colonel Qadhafi and Sheikh Zayed

► might have more in common than at first appeared. Sheikh Zayed has repeatedly criticised the build-up of foreign military forces around the Gulf and has said Gulf states do not need the US or anybody else to defend them. He also declared that Israel is a far bigger threat to the Gulf than the Soviet Union.'

During the visit, it was announced in Abu Dhabi that the United Arab Emirates will represent Libyan interests in the United States following President Reagan's orders earlier this year that the Libyan Bureau in Washington be closed down.

Subsequently, the Libyan leader made a brief visit to Kuwait before flying on to Syria for talks with President Hafez Assad, and various Palestinian leaders. The Syrian and Libyan leaders reviewed the crisis confronting the Arab nation as a result of American policies in the area, and reportedly discussed the progress towards the planned union between their two countries first announced during 1st September celebrations last year.

Protests to UN over US threats

THE POPULAR Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison, Libya's Foreign Office, has protested to the UN at repeated American threats towards the Libyan revolution and people. A note delivered to the UN Secretary General by the Libyan delegation to the United Nations said that the US campaign had been stepped up in order to prepare the atmosphere for an attack on the Jamahiriya, either directly or through agents.

The Libyan note cited five areas in which the US preparations had been detected; the announcement of the US Administration's readiness to arm states which claimed to be 'threatened' by Libya; the increasing of military aid to neighbouring states, particularly Egypt and the Sudan; the escalating propaganda campaign against the Jamahiriya and its revolutionary leadership; the exposure of the CIA plot to move against the Jamahiriya, which even members of the US Congress feared would include the assassination of Muammar Qadhafi; and the increase in the US military presence in the area around the Jamahiriya, particularly the activities of the US Sixth Fleet just off Libya's coasts.

The note drew attention to a 'serious and deteriorating situation' caused by these events, and in the light of the American record of subversion and the overthrow of Third World governments, said that peace and security were threatened; the moves were an attempt to interfere in the

internal policies of the Jamahiriya, and amounted to terrorism, though practised by a state which was a permanent member of the UN Security Council. But, the note concluded, such actions were in defiance of international law and in breach of the UN Charter.

Weinberger orders total militarisation



Caspar Weinberger

AMERICA'S SECRETARY of Defense, Caspar Weinberger, has issued instructions to the American armed services to plan for an escalation of US military might unprecedented even by the standards of the most heavily armed country in the world. According to a report in the *Washington Post* on 19th July, Weinberger has asked the US military to work out what changes would be necessary to allow half of America's industrial capacity to be switched to military production. The report compared this with the war in Korea, which absorbed eight per cent of US industrial capacity, and that in Vietnam, which used 15 per cent of US manufacturing capacity.

The American Gross National Product (GNP) per annum is about \$13 trillion (\$13,000,000,000,000). The Weinberger plan would like a defence industry which would absorb \$1.5 trillion — roughly seven times the present US military budget of \$222 billion per year, already an all time record. It is generally agreed in the United States that industry in its present condition could not turn out the sort of weapons which Weinberger wants — evidently for a prolonged conventional war.

This is the first open admission from the Reagan administration that the US is seeking to fight a long, non-nuclear war. Since 1945, conventional military thinking has held that nuclear deterrence made war of any kind between the super powers impossible, since it would escalate into a nuclear exchange. The

gearing up for a long conventional war indicates that the US is increasingly concerned that it might have to fight other nations — those of the Third World and the non-aligned group — in order to preserve its grip on world power. As well as asking for plans which would allow this seven-fold increase in military spending, Weinberger also wants the US military to plan for 'doubling or tripling the defense budget in a crisis or a major shift in the world situation.'

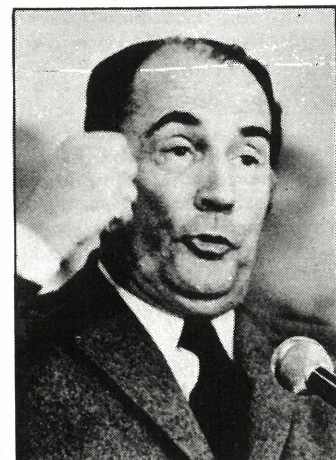
Lebanon considers offer of defence missiles

A COMMITTEE of the Lebanese Defence Ministry has been formed to consider the implementation of a Libyan offer to provide the country with a defensive anti-aircraft missile system. Press reports in Beirut disclose that the offer is worth about \$2 billion, and would entail training about 3,500 Lebanese citizens in the operation of the system.

The Libyan offer came in the wake of the Zionist attack on civilian areas of Lebanon, including the capital Beirut, which killed an estimated 400 people, including women and children.

Lebanese Premier Shafik al-Wazzan says that his country will consider any offer, from East or West, to provide the country with a reliable air defence system. The only stipulation would be that it be manned entirely by Lebanese.

France resumes arms shipments



President Mitterrand

THE NEW Socialist Government of France under President François Mitterrand is to resume the shipments of arms to Libya which were suspended by former President Giscard. The weapons in question include ten fast coastal patrol boats, Mirage jets, and

helicopters. In addition, Mitterrand has overruled his predecessor's ban on the French government-controlled oil company, Elf-Aquitaine, taking up a contract for further exploration in Libya.

The French government has said that it will be prepared to undertake new contracts as soon as Libyan troops have withdrawn from Chad. Libya is steadily reducing its armed forces in Chad, which are supporting the legitimate government of President Oueddei against Egyptian and Sudanese backed terrorists loyal to the renegade ex-Defence Minister Hissan Habre. Libya has welcomed calls by the Organisation of African Unity for the ending of foreign interference in Chad, but it is thought in Tripoli that the Sadat and Numeiri regimes are happy to see Libya tied down in Chad, in part because of the problems which this causes for the Jamahiriya with other countries like France.

It is expected that diplomatic relations will be restored quite soon. France is insisting on repairs to the French embassy in Tripoli, which was damaged during a demonstration by Libyans incensed at French neo-colonial interference in Chad in 1980.

Food as political weapon in Chad

US OPPOSITION to Libyan support for the legitimate government of Chad has resulted in the blocking of shipments of food to that country. *Newsweek* reported on 17th August that State Department officials 'allowed delivery last week of food that might otherwise have rotted, but mainly ... insist on supplying the food only to Chadian refugees who have fled to neighbouring Cameroon. US diplomats acknowledge that the restriction is based on politics; the Reagan administration is withholding the food because it objects to the presence of Libyan troops in Chad.' *Newsweek* said that the UN Children's Fund, UNICEF, and the government of President Oueddei had appealed to the US to permit direct aid. The State Department is said to have the matter 'under study'.

American reporters resume spying

AMERICAN JOURNALISTS travelling abroad are once again to be offered CIA briefings on the countries they visit. In return, they will be expected to let the CIA have information which they gather in the course of their work, the New York *Daily News* reported on 3rd August.

US backs opposition to Afghan government

'A YEAR and a half after Soviet troops marched into Afghanistan, the US Central Intelligence Agency is co-ordinating a complex, far-flung programme, involving five countries and more than \$100 million, to provide the Afghan resistance with the weaponry of modern guerrilla warfare. The result is an emerging anti-Soviet alliance — the United States, Pakistan, China, Egypt and Saudi Arabia ...' the respected US journalist Carl Bernstein revealed in the magazine *The New Republic* in July.

Bernstein, who was one of the journalists whose exposures of President Nixon's involvement in the Watergate break-in led to his downfall, said that the aid had been started by President Carter and continued by President Reagan. Carter told his aides that nothing should disturb the 'impression' that the struggle in Afghanistan was an 'Islamic' struggle against foreign invasion.

The weapons supplied have been relatively sophisticated, including missiles intended to bring down Soviet and Afghan government helicopters. Pakistan has helped by keeping its borders open for arms smuggling; Egypt and China have supplied Russian-made weapons which they have in large quantities. Saudi Arabia has provided financing equal to that of the US. The operation is being organised by direct contact between the CIA and the various countries' intelligence services, Bernstein revealed.

Former Democratic Senator Birch Bayh defended this blatant interference in the affairs of a sovereign country, by claiming that the object was to 'strike a balance'. At the same time, he said, the US was happy to see the Afghan opposition dying, but did not want them to win. 'We wanted the Soviets to pay a significant price. On the other hand, we didn't want to raise the conflict to the level of conventional warfare ... or provide so much assistance that the Soviets would pour more troops in.'

The astounding cynicism of the US — prepared to let Afghans die fighting Soviet troops, but determined that they should score no major victories — has seldom been more clearly revealed. The equally hollow pretence of respect for national sovereignty by the US will no doubt be borne in mind by world opinion when the State Department or the White House next criticise Libyan assistance to legitimate governments.



Afghan guerrillas: American-backed illusion of an Islamic struggle

Libya arms Palestinian resistance

THE LIBYAN Jamahiriya is continuing to supply arms to the Palestinian resistance, Foreign Affairs Liaison Secretary Ali Treiki confirmed at a recent press conference in Kuwait. Dr Treiki was answering questions on the role of the Jamahiriya in supporting the Palestinian cause. The Libyan Foreign Secretary pointed out that no-one could prevent the Palestinian revolution from obtaining weapons, because the Palestinian revolution was not created by 'an American or European decision'.

Dr Treiki stressed, 'The duty of the whole Arab nation is to arm the Palestinian people and directly defend it to deter aggression.' He confirmed that 'The Libyan Jamahiriya contributed volunteers to the battle, and several of them have died on the battlefields in southern Lebanon. This contribution helped to deter the aggression.' Dr Treiki said that the defence of Lebanon was an Arab responsibility, and that Libya had shown its willingness to participate by offering an anti-aircraft defence missile system to its brothers in southern Lebanon.

This they have done, he said, because the Israeli attack on the Iraqi nuclear reactor had demonstrated beyond doubt that the enemy was not just aiming at one country. 'All Arab countries have to be confrontation countries, because when the enemy violated the territory of three Arab states to hit the Iraqi reactor, it did not differentiate between Baghdad, Damascus or Kuwait,' Dr Treiki said.

Dr Treiki called for all Arab states to join the Steadfastness and Confrontation Front, whose role had acquired an enhanced

significance because of the situation in the region.

The Libyan Foreign Affairs Liaison Secretary was visiting Kuwait as part of a tour of a number of Arab countries in order to bring their leaders messages from Libyan revolutionary leader Muammar Qadhafi. The letters from Brother Qadhafi were a further step in his initiative to unite Arab ranks in the wake of the latest wave of Zionist aggression starting with the attack on the Iraqi nuclear reactor.

Other states visited by Dr Treiki included Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates, while Staff Major Abdul Salem Jalloud paid a visit to Algiers during August for talks with President Chadli as part of Libya's continuing efforts to unify Arab ranks.

Arab nation aids Nicaragua

THE LIBYAN Jamahiriya's deposit of \$100 million in the Central Bank of Nicaragua is only part of a continuing programme of support for the Sandinista revolution. Libya is also involved in talks about agricultural development. Algeria has provided arms and some thirty T55 tanks, needed for the defence of the country in the light of the delivery by the British government of sixteen more modern Scorpion tanks to the dictatorship which rules neighbouring Honduras.

The links between the Sandinista revolution and radical Arab states were a result of the co-operation in armed struggle between the Nicaraguan guerrilla movement and the PLO during the fight against the US-backed Somoza regime. The Nicaraguan government has been refused aid by the Reagan administration, which wishes to drive the Sandinistas into the arms of the Soviet Union so that Nicaragua can

more easily be discredited in the eyes of the Third World.

The Arab initiative is very much in line with the ideas of Muammar Qadhafi on creating a real non-alignment and bringing together small nations independent of the super-powers. The Cuban revolution was forced into greater dependence on the Soviet Union than it wished because of US policies; Cuban leaders are studying with interest the growing links between Nicaragua and the Arab nation.

Washington's pressure on Italy

THE IMPROVEMENT in relations between Libya and Italy provoked furious criticism of Italian policies by US leaders at the recent western summit in Ottawa. Italy's new premier, Giovanni Spadolini, held a private session of talks with US President Ronald Reagan. 'Nothing was revealed of the Spadolini Reagan discussion — which was joined at one stage by the Italian foreign and Treasury ministers, nor was an official communiqué issued ... But leaks from the Italian Foreign Ministry reveal that the Rome-Tripoli relationship was the Americans' main preoccupation,' wrote Fulvio Grimaldi in the magazine *8 Days* on 8th August.

Spadolini, leader of Italy's Republicans, is reckoned to be even more Zionist than the Christian Democrats who preceded him as Premier. But Libya and Italy enjoy a traditional relationship — even though the rooting out of the remnants of Italian colonialism was one of the early tasks of the Libyan revolution — and this has been strengthened by economic co-operation. Italian firms are prominent in Libya's development programme, and Libya has invested in Italian industry.

► Spadolini's party owes its existence to CIA covert financing of right wing groups within the Italian workers' movement in the years immediately after World War II. Like similar parties in several European countries, it is strongly 'Atlanticist' — sometimes more pro-American than parties with more reactionary economic and social policies. But it seems that Spadolini will be faced with strong pressure from both Italian workers and Italian business not to yield to Reagan's pressures.

Concern for H-block hunger strikers

CONCERN AT the British government's policy towards the H-Block hunger strikers in Northern Ireland has been expressed by the Libyan leader Muammer Qadhafi, in a letter addressed to the UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim. In doing so, Qadhafi has joined ranks with political and religious leaders around the world, from the Irish Republic to leading political figures in the United States, who have criticised what they consider to be inflexibility on the part of Prime Minister Thatcher and the British government.

In his 9th August letter, the Libyan leader told Dr Waldheim that he wished to draw attention to 'the series of slow, brave and tragic deaths which have been killing the bravest sons of Northern Ireland'. Although Libya has refused to give material support to the Provisional IRA because of its attacks on innocent civilians in the British occupied province of Northern Ireland, the authorities in Tripoli join with those who believe that a settlement can only be based on the reunification of Ireland.

Colonel Qadhafi urged UN intervention 'from a humanitarian and revolutionary point of view', otherwise, he added, 'the price which the intransigent and the onlookers will have to pay may have to be higher and more painful.' The deaths of the hunger strikers, he concluded, resembled something from a bygone age, when the world did not care about such things.

British lawyers slam Sadat

EGYPTIAN RULER Anwar Sadat has been sharply criticised by a British lawyers' group. The Haldane Society of socialist lawyers is concerned that large numbers of Egyptians are in jail for political reasons. A spokesman for the Society, Mr Jeremy Smith, who visited Egypt earlier this



Anwar Sadat with Mrs Thatcher in London recently

IN THE first week of September, Egyptian ruler Anwar Sadat arrested over 1,500 opponents of his authoritarian policies and moved against organisations which he regarded as a threat to his crumbling regime. Sadat also closed seven publications, including those of Islamic groups and the legal opposition Socialist Labour Party, and sacked journalists and teachers.

In a deliberate blow at Islam, Sadat brought under government control all privately-financed mosques. Teachers at the private mosques have been a focus of opposition to Sadat's deal with Israel, and his abandonment of the Moslem holy places in Jerusalem.

The Egyptian regime has again tried to pretend that the arrests were the result of disorders between Egyptian Muslims and the country's Coptic Christian minority. Sadat also withdrew recognition from the Coptic community's religious leader Pope Shenuda who has refused to send official pilgrimages of his Church members to Jerusalem as long as the city re-

mained under Israeli control. Although there have been problems between Muslims and Copts... he has in fact been conducting a purge against political opposition,' said Anthony McDermott of Sadat in the *Financial Times* on 7th September.

The Camp David agreements have 'insulted Egyptian national feeling' and the open door economic policy 'has not led to prosperity... economic problems have increased,' Egyptian opposition leader Lutsi Al Kholi told the London magazine *8 Days* on 12th September.

Sadat's police fired tear gas and rubber bullets at demonstrators who took to the streets in protest at the new reign of repression. The *Financial Times* commented in its editorial on 7th September that the purge 'has demonstrated the very circumscribed nature of Egypt's democratic experiment and made something of a mockery of Mr Sadat's professed respect for human rights. More ominously a question mark has been set against Mr Sadat's ability to maintain power indefinitely, and over the continuation of his policies...'

who use peaceful methods to oppose him were harassed and imprisoned.

Cairo increases subsidy to Zionists

THE EGYPTIAN regime of Anwar Sadat has reduced the price of the oil which it sells to Israel by three dollars a barrel with effect from 1st July. Zionist radio announced on 17th July. The price cut is the third reduction in three months. The radio said the Zionist Energy Ministry was 'full of praise for the positive response and Egyptian readiness in response to Israel's demands.' Egypt supplies the Zionist state with one quarter of its oil needs — two million tonnes a year.

Egyptian revolution celebrated

SPEAKERS FROM all parts of the Arab homeland joined in a commemoration of the Egyptian Revolution whose 29th anniversary fell on 23rd July. The celebration, in Tripoli, was organised by the Egyptian Nationalist Front. Speakers from the front contrasted the progress made in Egypt under Gamal Abdul Nasser with the desperate plight of the Egyptian people under the Sadat regime. The PLO representative in Tripoli, Abu Tariq, noted the 'dreadful silence' in the Arab homeland over the Zionist attacks on the Lebanese and Palestinians in Lebanon. He warned that 'for every action, there is an equal reaction, and said that 'silence will not protect thrones for ever.'

Egypt's jailed poet hero

AHMED FUAD Nejim, the Egyptian poet and popular hero, is seriously ill in Cairo's Alkala jail. He has been held by the Sadat regime since April, when he was arrested after spending four years in hiding. At the beginning of August, he called off a hunger strike which had lasted six weeks, on the advice of the Nationalist Progressive Unionist Party, the main Egyptian opposition grouping. Nejim was reaching the point where a hunger strike's effects are irreversible.

Nejim's crime is the writing of a poem, *Important Announcement*, which sardonically criticised the Sadat regime, especially in the light of the shortages of basic foodstuffs which provoked rioting in January 1977. He was sentenced before a military tribunal, where he appeared without the benefit of a defence lawyer, receiving a year's imprisonment for writing the poem. He started his hunger strike in protest against the form of his trial and the fact that there was no right of appeal.

Nejim has been imprisoned before, particularly because his biting comments on the failures of various Arab regimes have enjoyed broad public sympathy. He was jailed for his attacks on the way in which the Arab regimes had precipitated the defeats of 1967. His appeal to the masses — and the fear which he arouses among rulers like Sadat — is that he puts everyday language into poetic form and uses it to express radical, anti-establishment sentiments shared but not always openly expressed by ordinary people.



The 'Nimitz': American gun boat diplomacy enlarged for the nuclear age

As Libyan jets shot down, Reagan admits 'I approved the action'

AS PART of its continuing efforts to undermine the leadership of the Libyan leader Muammer Qadhafi, and in what is seen as a prelude to a fullscale US invasion of the Libyan Jamahiriya, US F-14 planes flying in Libyan airspace shot down two Libyan SU-22 jets on 19th August over the Gulf of Sirte less than 30 miles from the Libyan coast.

United States President Ronald Reagan has admitted to newsmen that he personally gave the orders for the US Sixth Fleet to carry out manoeuvres in Libyan waters and airspace; US forces were briefed for confrontation with the Libyans. The incident occurred only hours after the influential US news magazine *Newsweek* appeared on the newsstands around the world with a report that the Sixth Fleet manoeuvres in the Libyan claimed waters were intended as a direct challenge to the Libyan leader.

Qadhafi's view is well substantiated by the *Newsweek* report (cover date 24th

TWO LIBYAN Jets were shot down by the United States over the Gulf of Sirte on 19th August, as part of a scheme planned in Washington to challenge the Libyan leader Muammer Qadhafi. President Reagan has admitted he ordered the US Sixth Fleet into Libyan waters.

August) which disclosed, 'After months of debating how to neutralise Muammer Qadhafi, the Reagan administration this week will offer its first direct challenge to the Libyan strongman. On the instructions

of President Reagan, Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger has ordered the Sixth Fleet to conduct manoeuvres off the Libya coast in the Gulf of Sidra [Sirte].'

The journal added, 'The United States will test Qadhafi's reactions by staging war games inside the Gulf. To be sure that the world gets the message, the Navy has warned mariners and pilots in the region that 3,200 square miles of the Gulf will be included in the exercise's firing range.'

The Jamahiriya has responded by reporting the incident to the United Nations. This has prompted some observers to question why Washington has not lodged a complaint to the Security Council in view of America's claim that its forces were attacked in international waters and airspace by Libya.

Washington did, however, attempt to protest directly to the Libyan authorities, through the Belgian ambassador in Tripoli, who represents American interests ►

following the earlier closing of the US Embassy in the Libyan capital. The protest received a firm rebuff from Libya. Refusal to accept the Note, said Hamed El-Houderi in Brussels on 20th August was because it was intended to disguise American aggression against Libya's air force, air space, and territorial waters.

Libya's assertion of American aggression is accepted by some leading American politicians. Senator J Bennett Johnson, a Democrat, said on 20th August, 'Frankly, I think we sent a fleet in there to provoke an incident, and provoke an incident we did.'

In the wake of the incident there was a

consensus view amongst western commentators, reflected in Libyan and other Arab responses, that the United States had deliberately and provocatively sought to lead the Libyans into a confrontation situation. The Americans were well aware of the Jamahiriya's claim to the waters of the Gulf of Sirte (see separate report).

As a statement issued by the Libyan People's Bureau in London pointed out, 'If the United States wishes to test the validity of its claims concerning Libyan territorial waters and airspace, we believe the correct place is through the international courts, rather than through a display of military might. It is the Americans, not the Libyans, who are engaging in

gunboat diplomacy in clear violation of international conventions.'

The US provocations have been widely condemned. In the Arab homeland support for the Libyan Jamahiriya, and condemnation of the US actions, has been voiced by both radical and conservative Arab regimes in a display for solidarity with Libya which American commentators had earlier predicted would not occur. It marks a further failure of the US administration to fully appreciate the depth of Arab feeling against President Reagan's strategy for the Middle East, where feelings continue to run high following the recent US backed Israeli aggressions against Baghdad and Beirut.



Dr Omar Sodani, a member of the People's Committee of the Libyan People's Bureau in London, gives journalists the facts on America's aggression in the Gulf of Sirte

Washington's intentions very clear

'THIS ACTION was carried out under the instructions of the President of the United States himself. It has been done with the aim of destabilising the Libyan Jamahiriya and getting rid of Brother Qadhafi,' Dr Omar Sodani, a member of the People's Committee of the Libyan People's Bureau in London told a press conference on 19th August.

He condemned the US actions, saying they were a violation of the Jamahiriya's sovereignty and international law. The war manoeuvres of the Sixth Fleet which began a few days earlier were part of the 'continuing provocative actions' against Libya since Reagan took office.

The Libyan planes were intercepted less than 30 miles from the Libyan coast and subsequently shot down. He described the incident as 'a grave violation of Libyan sovereignty' and said the US had made clear her wish to

see the Libyan regime overturned.

'We believe the Americans have committed an aggression against Libya which cannot be justified by any means,' he said. The Libyan aircraft had not taken off with the deliberate intention of intercepting the US naval forces.

Dr Sodani continued, 'The Americans have been manoeuvring in our territorial waters for some time. American behaviour has been provocative, including statements by officials that they want to get rid of Qadhafi and destabilise the regime in Libya. They have said they will give military support to anyone who will carry out military action against Libya. The Egyptians are manoeuvring on our eastern frontier.'

Dr Sodani denied that Libya was making a claim to a 200 mile coastal limit. He pointed out that Libya claimed

the Gulf of Sirte as 'historical waters' because 'no other countries are involved'.

Libya has consistently pushed for a policy of 'the Mediterranean for the Mediterraneans,' he explained. 'We don't want foreign fleets in the Mediterranean. Libya rejects the presence of Soviet as well as US fleets.'

Dr Sodani denied that Libya would offer the Soviet Union base facilities. 'I don't think there is an exception that we are going to give facilities at this particular time. We might look for support from our allies, but they include many countries other than the Soviet Union,' he explained.

He further linked the aerial dogfight to the reported manoeuvres of 10,000 Egyptian troops in the Western Desert close to the Jamahiriya's eastern frontier and saw US 'intentions of destabilising Libya very clear'.

'America's excuse worse than the crime'

AMERICAN CLAIMS that its manoeuvres were intended to assert the freedom of movement in the Gulf of Sirte has been challenged by the Libyan leader Muammer Qadhafi. The real reason was to challenge the freedom of the Libyan people, he declared.

Speaking to a rally in Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital, Qadhafi said, 'It was not a question of territorial waters. Nor was it a question of freedom of navigation in international waters nor a question of the Gulf. This is an excuse which is worse than the crime. It is in fact an expression of US hostility to the freedom of the people. The USA does not bother at all about the Gulf of Sirte, territorial or non-territorial waters; but the USA does not want freedom for the people.'

With regard to the Libyan aircraft, Qadhafi said, they had no orders to attack the Sixth Fleet. The two aircraft were on routine patrol duty, guarding Libyan territorial waters and airspace, and it was their duty to chase any object which violated those waters and airspace. The two aircraft were of a type suitable for fighting against sea targets and not air targets, and they were not equipped with missiles and machine guns.

'While the two Libyan aircraft were carrying out their reconnaissance duty,' he added, 'they were surprised to see a US F-14 fighter aircraft enter Libyan airspace. They rushed to warn it, but it still persisted in violating Libyan airspace. In this instance, like all aircraft guarding Libyan borders and airspace, the two Libyan aircraft chased the US aircraft when it persisted in violating Libyan airspace, and shot it down.'

The Libyan leader also refuted US claims that the Libyan plane had been engaged by two US fighter jets. 'The two Libyan aircraft thereupon saw eight US aircraft take off from the US aircraft carrier and attack them. This formation of US aircraft shot down two Libyan aircraft as they were carrying out their legitimate mission to defend Libyan territorial waters and airspace.'

Brother Qadhafi re-asserted that the Gulf of Sirte would remain 'an indivisible part of Libyan territory'. He continued, 'We consider the United States to have actually threatened international peace in the crucial Mediterranean region. He urged all Mediterranean peoples to 'stand against US bases in the Mediterranean for the cause of peace'.



Elsewhere, the Organisation of African Unity has openly condemned the US actions, while in Europe concern is being voiced even amongst Washington's NATO allies over the new US preference for military confrontation in a region from which the western industrial nations receive the major proportion of their essential oil supplies. Strongest criticism of the US action has been voiced by West Germany and Italy.

One revelation to emerge in the aftermath of the 19th August incident has been that the first foreign policy decision of the new Reagan administration concerned Washington's stance towards the Libyan Jamahiriya, and a review of options aimed at destabilising the Libyan authorities and even assassinating the Libyan leader Muammer Qadhafi.

The American attack has been seen by commentators as a further example of the Reagan administration's determination to impose its influence and power on a world-wide scale. Ironically, while the Reagan administration is rejecting Libya's claims to sovereignty over the Gulf of Sirte and her 12 mile territorial waters, the implication of the US actions is that America has a supreme right to act militarily anywhere in the world.

The Libyan response has been to accuse the United States of a deliberate, premeditated challenge to the Jamahiriya's

sovereignty, and of planning a military invasion of Libya. 'The Gulf of Sirte is part and parcel of Libya. We shall be ready to defend the Gulf of Sirte even if it means a bilateral war with the United States or a third world war,' said Muammer Qadhafi at a news conference in Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital. The United States was playing with fire by violating Libyan territorial waters and airspace, he said.

Colonel Qadhafi stressed that his fighters had no instructions to shoot down the American planes. Other statements issued by the Pentagon confirm this, with the Americans admitting that the pilots in the two Libyan planes downed by the Americans received no orders from Libyan commanders on land to fire on the US fighters. Indeed, the two Libyan planes were not of the type which would have been used if the Jamahiriya had intended to confront the Americans in the air. The SU-22 planes are intended for reconnaissance and bombing missions. The Libyan forces have Mirage and MiG fighters better suited for aerial combat.

Prior to the US exercise the Americans issued a warning to mariners and shipping to keep clear of the area. However, Vice Admiral Rowden admitted at his 24th August press conference that the incident was outside the area designated by the Americans for their manoeuvres. 'It took

place slightly to the south,' he was quoted as saying in the *International Herald Tribune* the following day. At the same press conference Rear Admiral James E Service admitted that the Americans had, in fact, on a number of occasions flown closer to the Libyan coast than the Pentagon had previously admitted. 'About the closest we came in any instance would have been 25 miles to their coast,' he said, in reference to operations taking place in the 160 mile long Gulf of Sirte over which Libya claims sovereignty.

The *International Herald Tribune* report noted, 'Previous accounts of the dogfight by US officials have concentrated on the downing of the two jets, which, the Pentagon has said, occurred 60 miles from the Libyan coast.'

The *Times* reported, 'Despite determined questioning the officers would not be more precise in placing the scene of the incident than that it occurred "some 50 to 60 miles off the Libyan coast"; beyond that point irritableness set in.'

Vice Admiral William H Rowden, Commander of the Sixth Fleet admitted at a 24th August news conference aboard the *Nimitz* that the US planes had been challenged by the Libyans on no less than 44 occasions during the two-day exercise. Yet despite the clear warning from the Libyans, the United States continued to sail and fly in Libyan waters.

The Gulf of Sirte and Libya's 'historic waters'

SINCE THE shooting down of two Libyan jet fighters in the Gulf of Sirte at dawn on 19th August 1981, much as been said and written about Libya's 'territorial waters'. A great deal of this has been inaccurate and misleading because of the confusion associated with law of the sea matters. Such confusion is hardly surprising when it is remembered that successive UN Conferences on the Law of the Sea have been trying to agree upon an internationally acceptable convention governing the oceans for the past seven years. By 1980 the third UNCLOS had a draft treaty before it which might have become one of the most important international agreements of all time but for President Reagan's astonishing decision to review the 300 articles and eight annexes before deciding whether or not to sign. In the absence of this treaty the only principles governing the law of the sea are in the Convention drawn up by the first UNCLOS in 1958. Unfortunately it is incomplete, ambiguous in parts, and dated in its assumptions. Moreover it was only signed by a relatively small proportion of the states constituting the international community today. There is thus still no recognised regime for the oceans, and a dangerous process of national encroachment is under way.

Types of offshore jurisdiction

In general terms states may exercise five types of jurisdiction offshore, each of which bestows slightly different rights and obligations. These are:

(a) **Internal waters:** the sovereignty of the state is absolute, and ships of other states do not enjoy the automatic right of 'innocent passage'. Bays and estuaries less than 24 nautical miles (1 nautical mile = 1.15 statute miles) across at their mouths are internal waters, and highly indented coasts or coasts fringed with islands may be given straight baselines to enclose internal waters.

(b) **Territorial waters:** the sovereignty of the state is again total except that the ships of other states have the right of innocent passage. The state controls the airspace, the waters, and the seabed itself and all the resources. There is no international agreement as to the width of the territorial sea, claims varying from 200 nautical miles (in South America) to three, six, or twelve miles, all of which are common claims.

Libya's claim to territorial waters (contrary to US statements following the Gulf of Sirte incident) is an orthodox twelve miles (Libyan Territorial Waters Act, February 1959). Territorial waters are measured from low water mark, or from any straight baseline enclosing internal waters.

A CENTRAL feature of the American campaign against the Libyan Jamahiriya in the recent Gulf of Sirte incident was a deliberate distortion of the facts relating to Libya's territorial waters. Gerald Blake of Durham University examines the Jamahiriya's claims against the background of international conventions.

(c) **Continental shelf:** the natural prolongation of the landmass under the sea may be exploited by the coastal state for minerals, oil and sedentary living species. Continental shelf rights however give the coastal state no jurisdiction over the sea or the airspace. There is no agreement as to where the legal or physical outer limit of continental shelves is deemed to be. Many of the world's continental shelves have already been partitioned between coastal states, but not without difficulty.

(d) **Contiguous zones:** Beyond territorial waters, states may exercise control for specific purposes to a specified distance (typically 15 to 20 miles), notably for customs and sanitary purposes. Not all states claim a contiguous zone, and distances claimed and purposes vary. Libya has no contiguous zone.

(e) **Exclusive fishing:** Many states have made unilateral claims to exclusive fishing zones at varying distances beyond their territorial waters. The multiplication of exclusive fishing zones, many of which already extend to 200 nautical miles, was a major reason for the need for a new treaty on the law of the sea.

It should be noted that the draft UNCLOS treaty includes proposals for (a) global 12 mile territorial waters, and (b) the introduction of a global 200 nautical mile Exclusive Economic Zone. The EEZ would give the coastal state the right to control all the resources of the seabed and the waters above to a distance of 188 miles beyond territorial waters.

The historic bay

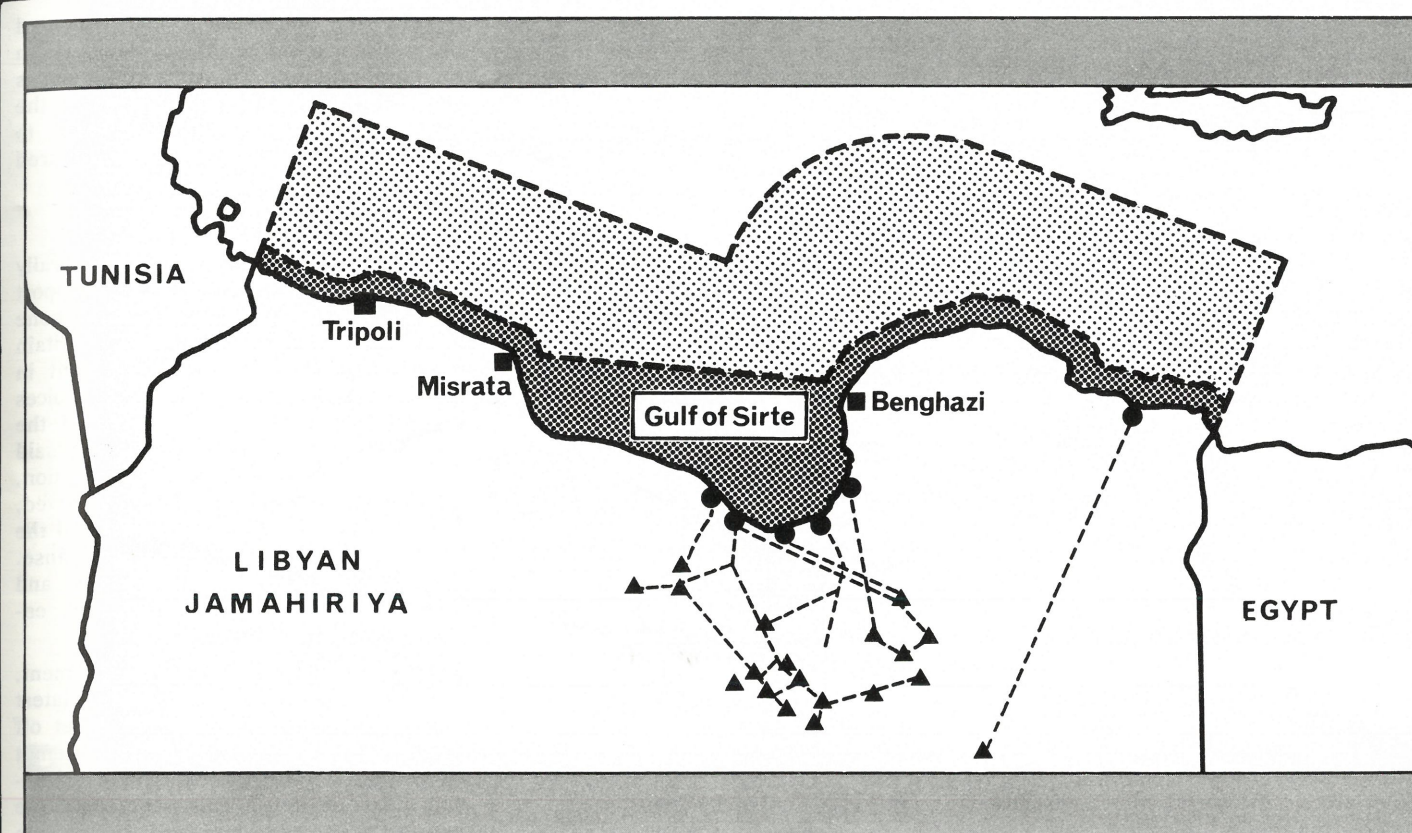
While the 1958 Convention recognised the status of internal waters, and drew up rules for their delimitation, it also recognised the concept of 'historic bays', for which no rules can be given. Bays which exceed the recognised and legal size of internal waters may be historic bays by virtue of traditional use by the coastal state. The fact is that there is no defini-

tion of a historic bay, and almost any bay could be declared, with some justification, as a historic bay. In practice well over 50 have been declared, some of which are scarcely in dispute such as the Bristol Channel, St Peter's Bay, Varanger Fjord in Norway, or Long Island Sound. Others are less acceptable to particular parties; thus Libya rejects Tunisia's claim to the Gulf of Gabès as historic waters.

The significance of a historic bay is that (a) it carries the same degree of sovereignty as internal waters and therefore no right of innocent passage, and (b) territorial waters are measured seawards from the line enclosing historic waters. Libya's claim to the Gulf of Sirte on 9th October 1973 was in effect a historic bay claim since 'through history and without any dispute the Libyan Arab Republic has exercised sovereignty over the Gulf'. [1] The declaration also stated that Libyan sovereignty was essential for national security, and that ships of other states would not be allowed to enter the Gulf without prior permission. The closing line across the Gulf is along 32°30' north and stretches for 260 nautical miles, constituting one of the largest historic bay claims in the world, probably second only to Hudson Bay in area.

The United States objected to the Libyan claim in February 1974 arguing that Libyan authority had never been continuous, recognised, and effective in the Gulf of Sirte. Malta also rejects the Libyan claim, no doubt partly because it could prejudice decisions concerning the Mediterranean seabed between them. On 19th August 1981 the United States was not challenging Libyan territorial waters claims, but a historic waters claim. The method of the challenge was deplorable; the draft treaty on the law of the sea now held up by the United States would be the first step towards sorting out law of the sea conflicts of this kind. Meanwhile the International Court of Justice can adjudicate between two parties by mutual consent. The Libya-Tunisia dispute over the continental shelf is currently before the Court. Similarly Libya and Malta agreed to take their seabed dispute to the Court in 1976, although Libya has yet to clarify the decision. Recent UNCLOS negotiations have proved the value of painstaking argument and debate on law of the sea matters, with reasonable agreement among as many as 140 states being achieved on a range of issues. The Gulf of Sirte problem could be resolved peacefully — if that is indeed the issue, and not wider political disagreement.

1. Ali A El Hakim, *The Middle Eastern States and the Law of the Sea*, Manchester UP, 1979, p. 10.



To justify American actions against the Libyan Jamahiriya, Washington and the press have said that Libya claims this 200 mile territorial limit

The real extent of Libya's territorial waters, based on a twelve-mile limit and the 'historic waters' of the Gulf of Sirte

Major oil ports, concentrated on the Gulf of Sirte, would be US targets if Washington's planned invasion ever materialised

Oil pipe lines

Main oil fields

Washington alone at sea

THERE ARE signs of growing impatience with the Reagan administration's attempts to block international agreement concerning territorial waters which is being drawn up by the UN Law of the Sea Conference. One effect of the Americans' move to delay the signing of the treaty earlier this year was that Washington was able to exploit the vagaries of the *status quo* in its attempts to justify the US intrusion into Libyan waters in the Gulf of Sirte, which led to the 19th August incident in which two Libyan jets were shot down.

On 25th August, the President of the UN Conference on the Law of the Sea, Mr Tommy Koh, said the US had until next April to agree with the rest of the world governing the use of the oceans and their resources. By scheduling the final session for next Spring, the 150 nation conference has sent to Washington a clear signal 'that we mean business, that we have waited a year for the US and that is long enough'.

Meanwhile, the American position regarding Libyan territorial waters has been challenged by *The Guardian* newspaper in London. The paper's Defence Correspondent, David Fairhall, pointed out on 20th August: 'By drawing a line across the Gulf of Sirte, the Libyans have

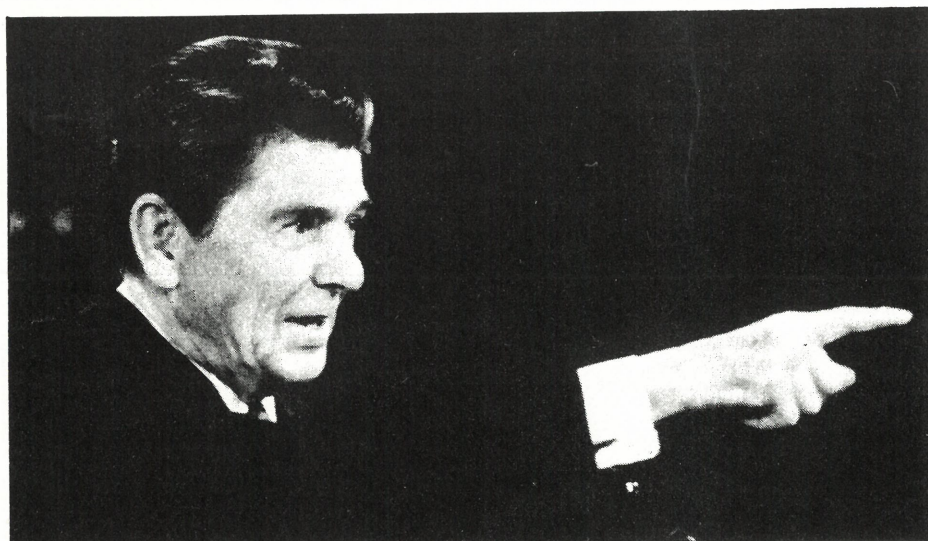
managed to extend the territorial waters they claim — and thereby the sovereign airspace which lies above it — without directly challenging the general principle, already agreed by the law of the sea conference, that territorial seas shall in future be limited to 12 miles, not three.'

On the same day *The Guardian* editorial commented, 'The Law of the Sea has been left by successive international conferences in something of a mess. It straddles territorial zones up to 12 miles, and economic zones of up to 200. Ill-definition should not by itself rule out a Libyan interest. Norway has long taken a line from headland to headland as the start of its territorial waters. Libya appears to have done less, claiming only the water inside the line, not outside.'

The editorial also questioned whether the United States had any justification for its actions based on its advance warning of military exercises in the area. 'Legally the Americans might be right or wrong, but that is not the only question,' the paper said. 'It would not be the only question if the Soviet fleet chose to carry out manoeuvres in the Gulf of Taranto or the Wash; and if the Russians protested that they had issued the required "Notice to Mariners", it would be assumed that they were talking tongue in cheek.'

Parallels with other gulfs similar to Sirte were also drawn by *The Guardian's* Diplomatic Correspondent, Patrick Keatley, who wrote on 20th August: 'It would seem inconceivable for the US Sixth Fleet to conduct war games in the Bay of Biscay or in the Tyrrhenian Gulf between Naples and Palermo, without enlisting the co-operation and goodwill of France and Italy. Yet these bays are at least as open-jawed as Sirte.'

In a further comment on the issue in the same day's paper, Iain Guest reported from Geneva, 'Delegates at the current UN Law of the Sea conference found yesterday's clash between Libya and American fighter planes frightening but deeply ironic. As one delegate pointed out, the precise aim of the sea treaty is to lay down rules governing the breadth and usage of territorial seas, and also the airspace above them, so as to prevent such dangerous clashes. But the main obstacle to the completion of such a treaty is President Reagan's determination to review it in its entirety. As soon as Mr Reagan announced his review, a group of some 80 developing countries, led by the Philippines and Brazil, immediately demanded that the issue be reopened — and that no warships be allowed into territorial waters without getting permission.'



Reagan's cowboy politics have brought world-wide condemnation

Reagan's 'political machismo' condemned

THE UNITED States has faced criticism from around the world with both conservative and radical regimes condemning America's actions in shooting down two Libyan planes on 19th August, and challenging the United States' right to enter Libyan waters and airspace.

Undoubtedly the strongest blow to American morale came with the statement issued by the Gulf Co-operation Council, which embraces Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states. American commentators briefed by the State Department had predicted that conservative Arab regimes would not criticise the Americans' actions against Libya. However, on 22nd August the Gulf Co-operation Council on behalf of its six member states (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman) declared that 'America's action constitutes a political aggression which the Council strongly denounces.' The Council's General Secretary described the 'American provocation' as 'a snare laid by the Americans for Libya. It is a provocative snare and an act of piracy akin to the acts of piracy committed on the high seas in the Middle Ages.'

He added that the United States had no right to carry out exercises off the Libyan coast and said 'otherwise what does the United States want from its exercises off the Libyan coast?' He said, 'The aggression is no more than a political decision, and is no more than a political aggression. This action is more grave than the United States imagines because by this the United States was promoting a cowboy policy.'

In a cable to the US Senate, the Arab Parliamentary Union council's conference on 23rd August similarly accused the Americans of 'air piracy'.

In Kuwait an official statement declared, 'We condemn such an aggression. We

IF THE United States believed it could attack Libya without provoking international criticism, it seriously misjudged the growing world concern at Washington's new military assertiveness. In the Middle East, Africa and Europe the incident has been condemned.

confirm our standing by any Arab brother against whom an aggression is committed from any quarter.'

In Tunis, a statement issued on behalf of the League of Arab States, by the Secretary General Mr Chedli Klibi, on 20th August, said, 'The consequences of these manoeuvres constitute a violation of the integrity and security of an Arab state. In denouncing this behaviour the Arab League Secretariat General expresses the feeling that it does not serve Arab-American relations and in no way favours efforts undertaken to improve these relations.'

In the Jordanian capital, Amman, it was announced on 20th August that a special committee had been set up to discuss a boycott of American products in Jordan, in retaliation for 'hostile United States policy towards the Arabs'. A 150-member committee had been elected to represent all political, economic, social and professional bodies.

Addressing a rally in solidarity with the Jamahiriya staged in Beirut, the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat hailed the 'Libyan decision of confrontation' as an expression of 'the new Arab determination in this region'. The PLO Chairman warned of the American conspiracy

against the Arab nation, and lamented the continuing failure of the Arab nation to unite to confront the American schemes to subjugate the independence of the region. The Palestinians were ready to send troops to support Libya, declared Mr Arafat.

European concern

In Europe the reaction was generally muted, but the absence of firm support for the United States cannot have gone unnoticed in Washington. Only Britain openly supported the US action, but in London opposition MPs added their voices to the international condemnation of the Reagan scheme. Stan Newens, MP, said on behalf of the organisation Liberation, to which many trade unions are affiliated, 'The situation in the Middle East and the North African region is already tense. US determination to flex its muscles and show military strength in the area endangers world peace.'

Another British Member of Parliament, Mr Ernie Ross, declared, 'This latest encroachment by the US Sixth Fleet off the coast of Libya was a clear attempt to provoke the Libyan forces into defending their territory. This represents the most dangerous incident yet in the Reagan administration's worldwide exercise in political machismo.' He added, 'How outraged would US opinion have been if the Libyan Navy had been manoeuvring off the New Jersey seaboard?'

Perhaps the most unexpected criticism of the US came from the Italian government, which has been under heavy pressure from Washington to down-grade relations with Libya, and whose new Prime Minister is generally considered hostile to the Arabs. However, on 23rd August, Italy's Defence Minister said that President Reagan had acted in provoking the crisis like someone 'who lights a cigarette near a stick of dynamite'. Earlier, Signor Accame, a member of the Italian Senate's defence and foreign affairs commission said the incident raised the question of whether the Americans and the Russians should conduct manoeuvres close to the coasts of other countries without first obtaining authorisation from those countries.

Africa condemns

The Organisation of African Unity, of which the Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi will become President next year, also condemned the United States over the Gulf of Sirte incident. A statement issued from the 50 nation OAU headquarters in Addis Ababa accused the United States of planning the action, and added, 'We want to impress on the Reagan administration that the era of gunboat diplomacy is over.'

The statement noted that the US government has increasingly concentrated on antagonising the people and authorities in Libya. Even countries friendly with the USA considered the action to be immoral and deplorable, the statement said.

INTERNATIONAL Herald Tribune

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The U.S.-Libya Collision More Than Meets the Eye?

If the Pentagon's account of how and why two U.S. Navy F-14s shot down two Libyan Sukhoi-22s is correct, there is little doubt that the action was justified. Libya, unilaterally claims territorial waters that conflict directly with the international consensus.

cluding Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig Jr. spoke out frequently about the need to contain Libya's aid to terrorists, its aggression against African neighbors and its enormous military buildup. The United States asked other countries to stand in solidarity.

Press suspects lies from the White House

ALTHOUGH NO one expects the Reagan administration to openly clear its intentions towards the Libyan Jamahiriya and its leader Muammar Qadhafi, the western press appears to accept that the Gulf of Sirte incident had little to do with the issue of territorial waters (and even if this were the case, there has been some serious questioning as to whether Washington adopted the correct procedures to assert its dispute).

Behind the general euphoria that the strongest nation in the world succeeded in shooting down two far-from-modern, and ill-equipped reconnaissance planes belonging to a Third World state lacking the experience in modern warfare which US foreign policy with its record in South-East Asia and its massive military and training budget has afforded the Americans, even the generally pro-American press have sensed a scandal of epic proportions.

Many newspaper reports and editorials have pointed to the real motive behind the Sixth Fleet exercises in the Gulf of Sirte, referring to the fundamental conflict between US and Libyan policies which have led the Reagan administration to set as its target the destabilisation of Libya and the overthrow of authorities loyal to Muammar Qadhafi.

Alexander MacLeod, Diplomatic Correspondent of *The Scotsman* summed up the situation best of all in a background report published on 20th August. He pointed out, 'The two Libyan planes that ended up in the waters of the Mediterranean were intended as an American reminder to Qadhafi that the Reagan White House will not tolerate Arab political extremism if it infringes the Administration's own aspirations in the area of the Gulf.'

WHILE THE White House claims that the Gulf of Sirte incident was unexpected, and about territorial waters, there is evidence that the western press senses that the Reagan team is lying.

Ali Aziz examines some of the comments appearing in the English language press, which point to a major cover-up of a scheme which involved subversion against the Libyan authorities.

With some pertinence, MacLeod managed to summarise the fundamental differences which now divide Qadhafi's Libya from Reagan's America. 'President Reagan, determined to create strategic footholds in the region, is convinced that Libya is a destabilising influence, capable of throwing his long term plans awry. Colonel Qadhafi is worried lest what he considers to be his own country's essential interests in the region are undermined by Reagan's policies.'

And the Scots commentator added, 'Apparently President Reagan is calculating that challenging Libya's pretensions along its own coastline, striking back at Libya's military actions, and generally assuming an aggressive posture will hold Col Qadhafi in check, while the broader US strategy for the region develops.'

On the other hand the press, in recog-

nising the motives for the American provocation, were deeply flawed in their overall coverage and commentary on the incident. While most accepted the destabilisation motive, there was also a general tendency to seek satisfaction from 'the West's victory'. Even though many papers referred to the subversive propaganda campaign engineered against Libya and Qadhafi by the CIA, it was generally overlooked that many of the Americans' justifications for the action, which fall so easily from the lips of Reagan, Haig, Weinberger and others in Washington, are part of the very same destabilisation plan.

One can only observe that if Libya were really behind the political upheavals from El Salvador to the Gambia, through Saudi Arabia, Chad, Western Sahara, Northern Ireland, Sudan, and so on, then the Jamahiriya must be a force of truly major influence which surpasses that of the super powers. One London newspaper has recently managed to credit Qadhafi as the moving spirit and financial backer behind the disturbances in Brixton and other British cities. Nevertheless, the fact that Washington now finds it an easy smokescreen for its own global military build-up to claim Libyan incitement and involvement in any political disturbance in the world was seized by the press to justify the American view of Libya and its intervention in the Gulf of Sirte.

Nevertheless, questions remained in the minds of some newspaper editors that the incident in the Gulf of Sirte could provide a precedent for American action which makes the world a less secure place in which to live.

There was some tough speaking from *The Observer* in its 23rd August editorial ►

► which appeared under the headline 'A Second-hand Suez'. The paper commented, 'President Reagan has now affirmed that he was prepared to risk a confrontation when he ordered the naval exercise. If his aim was not to provoke an incident, it was at least to put on a demonstration of strength that would humiliate Colonel Qadhafi and weaken his position as Libya's ruler.'

The paper added, 'But doubts about whether the clash was accidental remain, and there hangs around the whole affair an oddly familiar odour from the past — the faint smell of a second-hand Suez.'

'There is the clash ostensibly over control of a waterway, but with the ultimate aim of destroying the local ruler. There are the same accusations of expansionist empire-building with Soviet backing. There is a similar over-simplified diagnosis of the problem and similar crude treatment. Above all there is the same antique imperial tone and lack of proportion.'

Even two of America's most influential newspapers sensed that behind the general euphoria of re-asserting America's military control over world affairs there could lay a scandal to rival Watergate. Had the press been told the truth, and had Reagan lied?

The *New York Times* referred to 'a trace of deception'. Its 20th August editorial commented, 'From the outset, President Reagan has put Colonel Qadhafi high on the list of enemies. But no matter how widespread the US revulsion of Col Qadhafi, it does not follow that the Reagan administration automatically wins full benefit from any doubt — not from a generation which remembers maritime milestones called the Bay of Pigs and the Gulf of Tinkin.'

'The original Credibility Gap opened up, it will be recalled, when a US President told less than the truth about a patrol boat attack in the latter and used that murky incident to justify the massive build-up in Vietnam. If Washington's charge of aggressive action is unanswerable, why not make it before the UN Security Council? Was the challenge timed in collusion with Egypt and Morocco? Giving a black-eye to Colonel Qadhafi won't hurt the US's global standing. It might even help. What would hurt is even a trace of deception,' said the paper.

The *Washington Post*, the same day, also hinted at deception. 'There will be, necessarily, much inquiry into the origin of this incident, and whether it might not have been avoided,' it editorialised.

The American owned, Paris based, daily *International Herald Tribune* also sensed a cover-up. 'A question more interesting than whether the fleet has a right to be where it was, or whether the US pilots were right to return Libyan fire, is whether the Mediterranean manoeuvres fit into a broader framework of US efforts to rid the world of Libyan ruler Col Muammer Qadhafi. There is no hard evidence available, but there is an interesting

pattern of US behaviour that is illuminating if inconclusive.'

The paper added in its 21st August editorial, 'It was an open secret in Washington, for example, that the Reagan administration was looking for ways to get Colonel Qadhafi. The first big inter-departmental foreign policy study ordered was on how to neutralise Libya. Several reporters were told on background by responsible high-level officials that various approaches were being explored, including a joint effort with Egypt and Israel, and that assassination would not be ruled out.'

The editorial continued to reveal the catalogue of conspiracy: 'The United States has asked other countries to condemn and isolate the Qadhafi regime. Oil companies were advised to evacuate their US employees from Libya. "The companies won't get another warning," an unnamed official told the *Wall Street Journal*. "We're planning confrontation politics and we want them out, whether there is a coup in the works or not."'

The paper concluded, 'It can't help make an observer curious about whether there wasn't more to the incident than is apparent.'

Frank Taylor reporting from Washington in *The Daily Telegraph* on 21st August made it clear that there was certainly more to the incident which Washington eagerly portrayed as innocent US planes being set upon by Libyan forces. 'Officials in Washington disclosed that before taking part in the exercises senior officers of the Sixth Fleet were called to Washington for a special briefing by the National Security Council. They were asked to assure the council that all operational rules, including those for engagement, were fully understood. They were also told, given the state of US-Libyan relations, they had better "be on their toes".'

Taylor disclosed, 'Officials made it plain yesterday that some sort of Libyan reaction was to be expected.'

It hadn't needed a White House background briefing to make this obvious to the *International Herald Tribune*. Its 21st August editorial noted, that allowing Reagan an extra six hours sleep 'suggests possible foreknowledge that an incident might occur.'

The paper added, 'The evidence might be thin, or even non-existent, but there is a hint of something other than the purely spontaneous about the affair.'

This was substantiated by *Newsweek* (cover date 31st August), which pointed out that none other than the Director of Operations for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Lt Gen Philip Gast, had been on duty when details of the shooting were flashed from the Sixth Fleet via European Command HQ to the National Military Command Center in Washington. The journal observed, 'Gast's presence at the center in the middle of the night, plus that of a special alert team, indicates that the Administration may have anticipated trouble.'

Of course the Americans expected trouble. Under the influence of the euphoria that America had, as far as Washington was concerned, fought a war and won it, even if against ill-equipped Libyan planes in a one-minute battle, even Reagan admitted he knew what was happening. As *The Times* report on 22nd August noted, 'President Reagan said yesterday that he personally ordered the navy to challenge Libya's territorial claim and conduct manoeuvres in disputed waters to show "America has the muscle to back up its words". "I approved the idea," he said.'

Reagan had ordered the intrusion into Libyan waters, *The Times* added, 'knowing in advance that hostilities might result.'

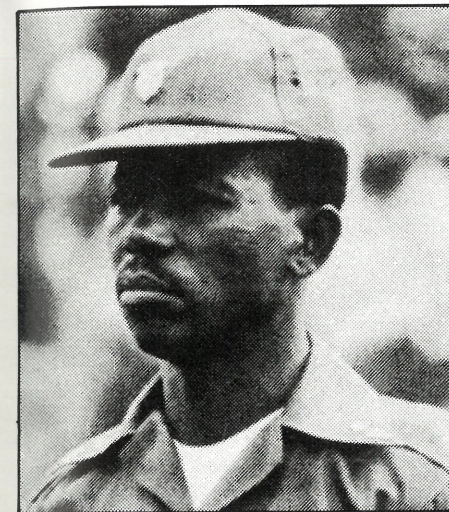
But it did not need Reagan's admission for many newspapers to piece together that Washington had deliberately set up the provocation. 'Washington maintains that yesterday's incident was unintended and unexpected. It knew, however, that the Libyans laid claim to the sea and airspace where the exercise was taking place and that they had protested,' said a report in *The Financial Times* on 20th August.

'The incident itself was clearly prearranged,' *The Guardian* declared in its 20th August editorial, while Peter Mansfield writing in *The Times* argued, 'The American planes may not have attacked the Libyans, as the Libyans claim, but they must have known that manoeuvres in the Gulf of Sirte would be highly provocative. It looks remarkably like a taunt.'

Meanwhile David Fairhall, *The Guardian's* Defence Correspondent, observed, 'For all the American talk of "routine naval exercises" and the calculated vagueness with which the Pentagon has described their location in the "South Central Mediterranean", yesterday's clash off the Libyan coast looks like a deliberately staged US challenge to Libya's claim that the Gulf of Sirte is part of her territorial waters.'

But was it a clash over territorial waters, as America claims? Peter Mansfield pointed out, 'Colonel Qadhafi has been convinced for some time that the United States is dedicated to his overthrow. If he appears to be neurotic, it must be remembered that only last month the American House of Representatives Intelligence Committee accused the CIA of planning covert action against him.'

Across the page, *The Times* editorial of 20th August noted, 'The Central Intelligence Agency and its director, Mr William Casey, have recently been accused in the American press of concocting plans to "destabilise" the Qadhafi regime, and even of planning to assassinate Colonel Qadhafi himself. The charges have not been substantiated, and there is no evidence that Washington has any such specific plans. None the less, the reports have carried sufficient weight to alarm some leading Senators.'



Mengistu Haile Mariam

AN IMPORTANT new alliance aimed at countering the increasing American military penetration in the Middle East has been formed between Democratic Yemen, Ethiopia and the Libyan Jamahiriya. The treaty signed in Aden on 19th August by the leaders of the three states, provided a dramatic rebuff to the American attack on two Libyan planes over the Gulf of Sirte on the same day. The significance of the agreement will not be lost on Washington and her allies in the region; it is a firm response to the emerging American axis which now threatens to divide territorially the Arab homeland as part of Washington's overall strategy to force the Arab nation to submit to its hegemony. This American axis embraces the Zionist state in Palestine, Egypt, the Sudan and Somalia.

Washington is now actively pushing ahead with plans to establish military bases in Egypt and Somalia, which are intended to provide back-up facilities for America's surrogate regimes to conduct a campaign of subversion and destabilisation against nationalist Arab regimes opposed to American presence in the region. The further aim of the American scheme is to force the Arab nation to accept the Camp David formula of submission to Israel, thereby betraying the Palestinians' rights to liberation and self-determination. It is intended to obtain greater US influence and control over Arab regimes in a bid to undermine the increasing Arab role in international politics and economics. The Americans fear that a united and nationalist Arab movement will pose a major challenge to American domination in world affairs, which Washington perceives as even more dangerous than the alleged threat from the Soviet Union.

The strategic importance of the tripartite pact rests on the location of Democratic Yemen and Ethiopia on either side of the Red Sea. In the event of a major confrontation resulting from American policies in the region, Aden and Addis Ababa would have powerful positions to challenge American fleet

Triple alliance signed in Aden to confront US schemes

A THREE state treaty linking Libya, Ethiopia and Democratic Yemen has been signed to provide a new alliance against the emerging American axis in the Middle East. It also marks an important move by Addis Ababa towards closer working with the Arab nation, as a special correspondent explains.

movements, and oil supplies to the United States.

South Yemen's President Ali Nasser Mohammed told the closing session of the meeting that the new grouping would be 'a material force taking action on the path of joint struggle against all forms of conspiracy and aggression which threaten the peoples of these countries.'

Earlier he had made clear that the three states aimed to counter increased military activity in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf by the United States and other western countries. President Mohammed said peace and security in the area were 'threatened by action centres and aggressive imperialist bases located not only in Israel, but also in Egypt, Somalia, Oman and the Indian Ocean.'

The treaty is not specifically concerned with military and defence matters, but the foundations of a closer working relationship between the three countries has already been interpreted by Washington as a military challenge to American influence in the area. South Yemeni Foreign Minister Salem Saleh Mohammed told reporters that it provided for 'increased co-operation in political, economic and other fields so as to serve these countries' peoples and enhance their independence.'

Turning point

The summit meeting, also attended by Libya's Muammer Qadhafi and Ethiopia's President Mengistu Haile Mariam, was hailed by President Mohammed as 'an



Ali Nasser Mohammed

important and glorious turning point in the history of bilateral relations and the strategic alliance between the Yemeni, Libyan and Ethiopian revolutions.'

The treaty and the subsequent official visit by Muammer Qadhafi at the head of a Libyan delegation to Addis Ababa marks an important realignment by Ethiopia with the progressive Arab movement. Ethiopia is a non-Arab country, despite being geographically surrounded by the Arab states of Egypt, Sudan and Somalia, all of which align with the United States against the Arab movement.

At the end of a five-day visit to Ethiopia, following the signing of the Aden treaty, during which Qadhafi held talks with the Ethiopian leader, a joint communiqué underscored the common views held by the two revolutions relating to the independence and integrity of Africa and the Arab homeland. They expressed their 'extreme anxiety about the continuation of imperialist interference in the internal affairs of African and Arab countries, and their concern for the increasing military exercises and aggressive activities particularly in the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean, the Gulf and the Mediterranean.' They considered these 'constituted a dangerous threat to peace, security and stability of the states of the region'.

Ethiopia and Libya also 'condemned the so-called Rapid Deployment Forces being established in a number of African and Arab states' and drew attention to 'the tendentious and continuous propaganda campaign' being conducted against revolutionary leaders in the world by the American and international western media.

Both countries pledged their support for liberation struggles in Namibia, South Africa and Palestine. Reagan's policy, they said, was 'to undermine the process of bringing about international detente'. They strongly condemned the Reagan administration's decision to continue the production and stockpiling of the neutron bomb, and called for international pressure 'to bear on the Reagan administration to stop its dangerous decision which may lead to an atomic confrontation'.



Solid achievements that challenge the United States

THE 1ST September 1981 marks the twelfth anniversary of the Al Fateh Revolution in Libya. In this special report, Louis Eaks assesses the developments during the past year, and sets the achievements against the background of the principles and aims of the Libyan revolution. Dr Alan George reviews the economic and development progress of the year in which the Jamahiriya embarked on its latest five-year development programme.

THE RECENT military clash between the United States and Libya over the Gulf of Sirte was an aggression of the conflict of fundamental principles which have to varying degrees divided the two countries since the Al Fateh Revolution in Libya on 1st September 1969 marked the start of a new era in Libyan history and development. But if the enmity between the US and Libya has now reached epic proportions, it is because that bloodless revolution

twelve years ago was to have international implications which few anticipated when Muammar Qadhafi's voice was heard over Libyan radio declaring that the monarchy had been replaced by a new revolutionary regime committed to social justice and development, and unity of the Arab peoples.

From the earliest declarations of the new authorities in Libya, it was clear that the principles which guided the country's revolutionary leaders provided a challenge to the United States and other neo-colonialist countries. The commitment of Qadhafi to non-alignment, Libyan control over her natural resources and the demand for an equitable return for the country's oil, was seen in Washington as a serious challenge to the status quo through which the United States had grown powerful and wealthy through economic exploitation of the Third World.

Twelve years later, it has taken the Reagan administration, so dependent on a militaristic approach to international affairs, to underscore the scale of these differences.

Early decisions of revolutionary Libya affecting international affairs included insistence that all foreign military bases, British and American, be withdrawn from Libyan soil. To London and Washington, a military presence in Libya was a central feature of their influence and control in the Arab region. To Libya, it was a manifestation of subjugation to foreign domin-

ation which was a direct negation of the country's independence.

Following this decision, which led to the evacuation of British and American bases in Libya, came Tripoli's initiatives in the field of oil pricing and control. In contrast to the acquiescence of other revolutionary regimes in oil producing states, Libya made clear its commitment to Libyanisation over this key economic sector through a policy of participation which seriously cut back the power of the multinational oil companies.

Moreover, the long-term political implications of Libya's moves to acquire a higher return from her oil exports were hardly appreciated by many observers at the time. The story of Libya's steps to raise the price of oil, and the knock-on effects within the oil producing world, is

"LIBYA is neutral, and will remain neutral. The Americans realise this. We do not have any Soviet bases, and we are not agents of the Soviet Union. They also know that Libya wants to unify the Arab nation and this will lead to the emergence of a third or fourth force in the world which will affect imperialist interests."

—Muammar Qadhafi,
19th January 1981

"BY what right does France, which is in the heart of Europe, regard the security of a country in the middle of Africa, as related to its own security. America, which is situated on the other half of the globe, is also regarding Chad's security as relating to its own security. So how could Libya not regard Chad's security as related to its own?"

—Muammar Qadhafi,
14th January 1981

well known. But still few people understand the consequences which now motivate the United States towards direct military confrontation with the Libyan Jamahiriya.

If the oil producing states now have economic power on an international scale, how great is the challenge to the United States power in world affairs if that economic capacity is taken into the political arena, particularly if the Arab states were to forge themselves into a united community.

Major force

With its fundamental commitment to bringing about Arab unity, the Al Fateh Revolution, manifested in the person of the Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi, is seen by the Americans as a moving spirit in the efforts to forge a new power block in world affairs. Moreover, as it is seen in the Libyan Jamahiriya, this power bloc would not be subservient to the United



The Stars and Stripes will never fly over Libya again

States, as is the European Community, but a major force for radical and fundamental changes in the world order.

The principles of the Libyan revolution were soon expressed in the form of the Third Universal Theory. This advocated the creation of a force in world affairs committed to positive non-alignment

between East and West. No country, including the super powers, had a right to foreign military bases outside their own territory. In addition, the commitment to social, political and economic justice for mankind, saw revolutionary Libya realign in support of liberation movements such as those in Palestine, Namibia and South

Who are the terrorists?

A RECURRING theme of the American propaganda campaign against the Jamahiriya and Muammar Qadhafi has been the accusations of Libyan backing for terrorist groups. It is a charge to which Libya has responded with confidence, re-directing the charge against the United States. At the same time, the authorities in Tripoli have adopted a clear and unequivocal stand on the 'terrorism' issue.

In late May, the General People's Congress in Tripoli promulgated 'Law No 11 of 1981', which declared the Libyan people 'oppose and condemn all forms of terrorism'. In the same month, Libya called for an international conference to thrash out a common approach to the problem of terrorism.

'Terrorism is a social evil which needs to be studied so that measures can be introduced to eliminate it,' said Ibrahim el Bishari at a Rome news conference.

Earlier in March Muammar Qadhafi said on Italian radio that Libya considered the Red Brigades and the Baader-Meinhof group as purely terror-

ists. He refuted US claims that Libya backed them. The Basques, he continued, had political objectives, but nevertheless he abhorred their use of terrorist violence and rejected their demands for separation from Spain. In Ireland, he supported 'the just demands of the people' expressed by the Provisional IRA, but expressed strong opposition to the use of terrorism. Similarly, an incident in Rome during February, involving two Libyans who fired shots at passengers on a Kuwaiti plane, was condemned as 'a criminal act' by the Foreign Liaison Bureau in Tripoli. And in March a hijacked Pakistani plane was refused landing rights in Libya. A Libyan official declared, 'We definitely don't like to be associated with terrorism and we absolutely condemn it.'

At the same time, Libya has defended its support for legitimate liberation struggles and revolutionary movements committed to the overthrow of oppressive regimes. Moreover, it sees 'terrorism' as a central feature of American foreign policy, arguing that US mili-

tary bases and its nuclear and neutron bombs are the real form of 'terrorism' confronting the world today.

The Foreign Liaison Bureau in Tripoli responded to US charges against Libya of terrorism at the time of the closure of the Libyan Bureau in Washington by pointing out, 'Before labelling others with international terrorism, the American administration must remember the acts of international terrorism it committed in Vietnam and El Salvador as it bombarded with its planes thousands of innocents and destroyed homes, bridges and the basic structures of these countries. It also turned a blind eye to the policy of spreading starvation and blackmail practised against the people of Nicaragua and other struggling peoples by imposing an embargo on its grain sales to these peoples.'

The Bureau added, 'It must also be remembered that the production of nuclear weapons, the setting up of military bases and the presence of American fleets in the Mediterranean Sea are forms of international terrorism.'



The General People's Congress is the focus of the Jamahiriya's system of direct democracy

► Africa (and others in Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Angola which subsequently led their countries to independence from colonial rule).

At home, on the domestic level, the changes resulting from the Al Fateh Revolution were no less dramatic. Having broken the fetters of economic exploitation and adopted policies which provided the country with large revenues from oil exports, the way was open for rapid social and economic development. At the same time political changes were set in motion which were to transform radically the power structure within the country. The Revolution set about deliberately challenging the existing centres of power held by the traditional government bureaucracy, management and the merchant classes. The Revolution had not come to replace one elite with another, Qadhafi declared, but to place power and control in the hands of every Libyan citizen. To achieve this goal Qadhafi advocated, and led the Libyans to adopt, a revolutionary political system based on people's committees and congresses. Created in every neighbourhood and community, with attendance open to all Libyan citizens, these congresses were to become the heart of the political system. It was here that social, political and economic issues are now debated. Once the basic (local) congresses had reached a consensus, the decision would be relayed to the General People's Congress, which has emerged in the new system as the country's supreme legis-

lature. The post of government minister was abolished, and replaced by a Secretariat, headed by a Secretary of a People's Committee, which limited the power once held by the old ministers, and ensured that wider consultation preceded policy and administrative decisions. The Jamahiriya's new five-year development plan, which started in January this year, was the product of months of discussion and consultation by the Libyan people in basic congresses to ensure that the country's development responded to the real needs of both the country and local communities.

Revolutionary committees

In a further development Muammar Qadhafi, who has no official post within the country's administration, and who is considered Leader of the Revolution, called on those who supported the principles of the Third Universal Theory, which he presented in the three volumes of *The Green Book*, to form revolutionary committees. These would act as a form of pressure group within the political system to advocate the implementation of policies consistent with the principles of the Revolution.

The advent of the Reagan administration in Washington has thrown the differences between Libya and the United States into focus. Overtures from Tripoli to Washington, in the hope that a new regime in the United States might provide the chance for an easing of tensions

between the two countries, were quickly dashed by Reagan and his team.

In fact Qadhafi's January 1981 call for Reagan to pursue foreign policies 'respecting the will of peoples and ending oppressive US intervention, both covert and overt, in the internal affairs of other countries', was to prove the exact opposite of what the new Washington administration had in mind. Qadhafi's vision of 'sound and equitable relations based on mutual respect and interests' between the US and Libya was quickly brushed aside, as Washington began secretly to review plans for action against Libya, including the assassination of Muammar Qadhafi himself.

Instead of respect for Arab sovereignty, the new Reagan administration launched a major campaign to establish a firm hold over the Arab nation, with moves to establish military bases in Egypt, Oman, Somalia and possibly the Sudan. At the same time, the militaristic approach of Reagan, Haig and Weinberger in Washington was seized upon by the Zionist leader Menachim Begin to escalate Israel's attacks on the Palestinians in Lebanon, and the subsequent bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor in Baghdad and the July blitzkrieg on Beirut.

By May relations between the two countries reached an all-time low, with Secretary of State Haig ordering all members of the Libyan People's Bureau in Washington to leave the country within five days.

Important role

Although a central feature of American propaganda against Libya has been to assert the Jamahiriya's isolation and that its foreign policy has failed, the continuing hostility to Libya portrayed by Washington's words and deeds tend to suggest that the Americans do not actually believe what they say. Given the Libyan Revolution's regional and international goals, the past year has seen the Jamahiriya consolidate some important achievements. These are all the more notable when considered against the background of the United States' determination that they should fail, and the American efforts put into undermining any moves consistent with Libya's goals (which it might be said are equally those of much of the Arab nation and the Third World peoples).

It is true 'that there remain' deep political divisions within the Arab nation between those such as Libya who oppose the American 'penetration and recognise the sacrifices needed to secure the liberation of occupied Palestine, and those subservient to American policy. It is Libya's important role as advocate of Arab unity and rejection of Arab subjugation to external powers, a catalyst of Arab radicalism and nationalism, which Washington fears. The Jamahiriya remains a major obstacle to the implementation of US plans in the region.

With the Beigin regime making no concessions to conceal Zionist ambitions and indulging in actions which highlight Israel's dependence on American political and military support, Libya has hardly needed to exert itself in putting its case. Qadhafi's 1st September call for union with Syria emphasised Libya's commitment to supporting the struggle against the Zionists as much as to the ideal of Arab unity. And although previous efforts to unite Libya with other Arab states have failed, one year later the cautious and realistic approach adopted by Tripoli to secure a union between the Syrian and Libyan peoples, rather than one of political leaders, continues to concern the Americans.

The past six months have seen Libya adopting an increasingly important and active role in support of the Palestinians and the Lebanese government. In a period when many Arab regimes appear bent on submission to Israel and the Americans, Libya's stand has assumed a new importance to those countries which are the target of American backed Israeli aggressions.

In relations with Tunisia and Morocco, recent months have seen some dramatic improvements towards normalised ties with the Jamahiriya, contrary to American plans. Similarly, Libya has withstood the American inspired hostility to its peace-keeping intervention in Chad and foiled US and Egyptian backed insurgents intent on securing another American foothold on the African continent. If the Americans have been able to secure their

Building a new society at home

ALTHOUGH THE focus of world attention on Libya has been largely concerned with the Jamahiriya's Arab and international policies, developments within Libya during the past year have seen a consolidation of the changes and achievements which have characterised the Al Fateh Revolution since 1969.

The General People's Congress, Libya's legislature, met in January and approved sweeping changes in the country's housing policy, education, defence and wages and incomes.

In a move to remove disparities in wages, the Congress approved a scheme based on equal pay for equal work and responsibilities, and agreed to link pay, allowances and promotion to productivity. The decision is within the context of the earlier moves which, implementing the principles outlined in Muammar Qadhafi's Green Book, removed capitalist control from industry and commerce, and made workers partners in their enterprise to give them a voice in the management and control of their work.

A further development of the efforts to remove exploitation, brought an end to the private retail trade (private import agencies had been banned earlier), and the opening of retail supermarkets which offer the consumer a wide range of goods at low prices — just one or two per cent above cost price.

Since the early days of the Revolution, Libya has been committed to provide decent housing for all Libyans, and massive achievements have been made since 1969 in housing development. At the same time, the Jamahiriya has rejected speculation and profit-making in real estate, and earlier steps were taken in which it was declared that a house belonged to its occupants. At the General People's Congress in January, Libya's housing

policy was reviewed, and it was agreed to provide free housing for those unable to pay rent. Congress also approved the establishment of a housing saving and investment bank to lend money to citizens and to companies operating in the housing field.

Against the background of the continuing foreign threats to the Jamahiriya, the Congress also approved the introduction of military training in all educational establishments and places of work as part of the country's moves to create a popular militia, embracing both men and women, to defend the country against invasion. 'Arms in the hands of the people' rather than simply under the control of conventional armies is a key feature of the revolution's defence policy.

The Congress's most important task, however, was to approve the new five-year development programme for Libya (see report). This had been the result of months of discussions and planning at meetings of basic people's congresses in communities throughout the country.

Last November, Qadhafi appeared on radio and television to urge the basic people's congresses to commit themselves to a programme which would weld high technology to social justice. He saw the country moving 'from a consumer society to a productive one', and urged that high-level technology be introduced into Libya's factories and industrial units.

He took the opportunity to stress again the important role in society for women, and called for the new five-year plan to provide some 100,000 new jobs for women. Only through new opportunities for women in Libyan society, and greater educational opportunities for all in technological education could the Libyan people fully achieve control over the Jamahiriya's wealth and natural resources, he said.

position in Egypt, Sudan and Somalia, Washington is well aware that its achievements could have been all the greater were it not for Libya's firm opposition.

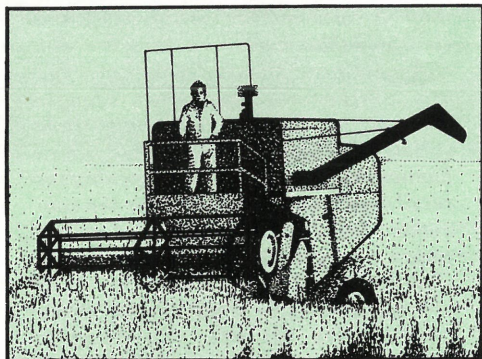
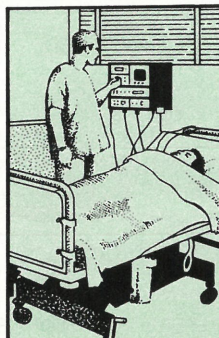
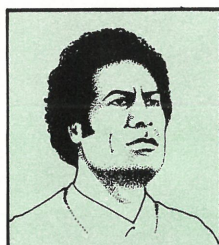
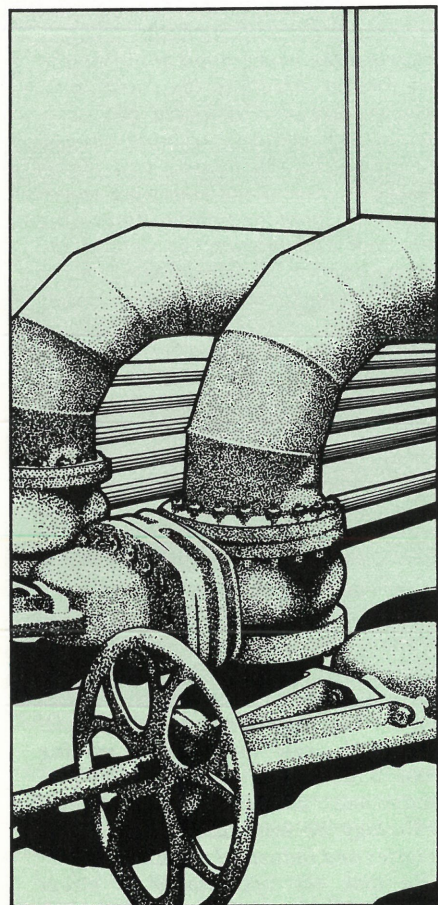
Even at the height of the western media campaign against Libya's intervention in Chad at the request of the Chadian government, the foreign ministers of Chad, Algeria, Niger, Mali, Mauritania and Libya met in Algiers to examine plans for strengthening regional co-operation between Saharan states.

At the OAU summit in Nairobi, the Americans saw all their schemes against Libya run aground in a further example of Washington's total inability to understand the mood and aspirations of the Third World. Not only did the OAU refuse to castigate Libya for its policy towards Chad, which the Americans had evidently

spent much time and money attempting to secure, but the Africans voted for Qadhafi to be the next President of the Organisation. The 1982 OAU summit will now be held in Tripoli.

Moreover, the past year has highlighted divisions between American and European attitudes towards the Libyan Jamahiriya. If Reagan's election in the US was to escalate opposition towards Libya, the elections in France brought the downfall of President Giscard who had also conspired against Libya. The election of Mitterand brought a relaxation between Tripoli and Paris. While Washington sought to isolate Libya, Britain entertained a visiting Libyan military delegation. And the dialogue between Libya and Italy has also been active during the past year.

Development: A year in the Libyan Revolution



THIS YEAR saw the launch of Libya's new \$62.5 billion five year development plan. Already, only nine months into the plan period, contracts worth billions of dollars have been awarded. In this special report, Dr Alan George reviews some of the highlights of the plan and the major developments of the past year.

THE ELEVENTH year of the Al Fateh Revolution in Libya has probably seen more concentrated efforts than in any previous year on developing the Jamahiriya's economic base and strengthening her welfare facilities. The second national five year development plan was launched in January this year and there has since been a spate of major contracts for a wide range of schemes designed to thrust the Jamahiriya into the industrial age and to bring her nearer the goal of national self-sufficiency in foodstuffs by the turn of the century. At the same time, the new plan does not neglect Libya's already impressive welfare services, and provides for major expansion in health and education facilities.

The 1981-85 development plan, providing for a massive \$62.5 billion investment, was endorsed by the General People's Congress, the Libyan legislature, in Tripoli during early January 1981. What distinguished the new plan from earlier development programmes was that

Priorities for Libyan development

THE IMPRESSIVE achievements of the Libyan Jamahiriya's development programme since the 1969 Revolution are part of a comprehensive campaign with far-reaching political and socio-economic implications, writes Louis Eaks. That development on such a scale is taking place in the Jamahiriya or any other oil producing state cannot be divorced from the vanguard role which the revolutionary authorities in Libya adopted in respect of oil prices in the early 1970s. Until that time little progress had been made by the OPEC countries to confront the multinationals, and it was not until Libya's Al Fateh Revolution that determined steps were adopted to ensure that oil producing states received an equitable return for their commodity, which it is now generally recognised was considerably under-valued.

While maximising their returns from oil sales, the Libyans also recognised that the country could not expect to exist for ever simply on its oil resources.

Preparations had to be made for the day when oil reserves were finally depleted. Moreover, no economy could be secure, simply on the basis of a single commodity export. Hence, a central feature of the country's development programme has been diversification of the economy, through the creation of new light and heavy industries.

Equally, to secure the real independence of the country, Libya could not continue to tolerate the heavy dependence on foreign expertise and management in the running of the Jamahiriya's economy and industry. Recognition of this led to a determined Libyanisation campaign, reflected in steps to raise the numbers of Libyan citizens taking educational courses in management and technology, either abroad or in later years of the Revolution in the newly created or expanded universities and technical training colleges.

Yet a third weakness to securing the

country's independence to pursue policies in the interest of the Jamahiriya and the Arab homeland was considered to be Libya's dependence on foreign imports, most importantly in respect of food. In the early years of the Revolution, Muammer Qadhafi spoke of the inability of any country to consider itself truly independent if it could not feed its own people without recourse to imported food. As a consequence, Libya has consistently given high priority to land reclamation and development of farming areas, together with food processing industries.

Another area of high investment has been that of welfare related projects such as housing, health and education, reflecting the Revolution's determination that the wealth of the country should be used for the benefit and advancement of its citizens. The result has been the emergence of a country-wide welfare state in which all these services are provided freely to all.

it was the first to have been shaped through detailed discussions by the Libyan people at their Basic People's Congresses. Under Libya's system of direct democracy, all citizens can make their voices heard on any issue by attending the Basic People's Congresses, which are open to everyone. All told, there are some 174 Basic People's Congresses in the entire Jamahiriya. Members of each attend the General People's Congress to relay the views of their local Congress, but members are not empowered to take any decisions on their own initiative. In this way the General People's Congress acts as a forum where the voices of all the Jamahiriya's citizens can be heard. The new development plan thus represents a significant extension of the areas of their lives over which Libyans exercise direct control.

The new plan, providing for an average annual growth rate of the economy as a whole of 9.4 per cent, is designed above all to diversify the Jamahiriya's economy away from dependence on the oil sector. Highest priority has been given to industry, with spending on manufacturing projects during the plan period set at \$13,508.9 million — 23 per cent of total planned expenditure. The average annual growth rate of industry is projected at 21.6 per cent. In second place comes agriculture, for which \$10,131.7 million — 16.2 per cent of total plan spending — has been earmarked. Agricultural output during the plan period is projected to grow at an average annual rate of 7.4 per cent.

While industry and agriculture are to witness major expansion, the oil sector is to be scaled down. At the beginning of this year, daily oil output was about 1.7 million barrels but this will be reduced by 15.3 per cent during the plan period. The intention is to prolong the life of the Jamahiriya's most valuable natural resource for as long as possible. The net result of the expansion of the non-oil sectors and the parallel reduction in oil output, will be that by the mid-1980s about 53 per cent of Libyan national income should be accounted for by the non-oil sector, compared with the 35.7 per cent in 1980.

With the launch of such an ambitious development programme, it is no surprise that the past nine months have seen a spate of major development contracts worth millions of dollars. Within the industrial sector, special emphasis has been placed on heavy industries, and the new projects are being concentrated mainly in a series of coastal towns that are being developed into major manufacturing centres.

A cornerstone of the industrial expansion programme is the Jamahiriya's first integrated iron and steel works, currently being set up at Misrata, on the coast about 150 kilometres east of Tripoli. The aim is to have the plant's \$3,300 million first phase operational by 1985. This will have an output capacity of 1.2 million tonnes per annum. The



Libya's university system is taking up the challenge posed by tomorrow's technology

Technology: The key to the future

IN A major speech broadcast over the Jamahiriya's radio and television networks on 19th November last year, Libyan leader Muammer Qadhafi pointed to the need for high-level technology to be introduced in the Jamahiriya's industrial establishments, and stressed the key role of the country's educational institutions in training Libyans to meet the challenges of accelerated socio-economic development. Only by acquiring the necessary skills could the Libyan people exert meaningful control over their wealth and natural resources, he added.

That the Libyan leader's message struck a chord with the Libyan people was demonstrated by the new five year plan's emphasis on education. Some 16,800 new classrooms are to be built during the plan period, and the educational sector is scheduled to attain an average per annum growth rate of 8 per cent. The plan calls for special attention to be given to the teaching of technical subjects in schools. The importance of education was thrown into sharp relief at the General People's Congress in January, when Planning Secretary Musa Abu Freiwa reported that shortages of skilled manpower had proved the most intractable problem facing the execution of the 1976-80 Transformation Plan.

Even before the launch of the new plan, the determination to enhance the technical capabilities of the Libyan people was already evident. In December last year it was announced that a technical university was to be established at Marsa Brega, one of the centres of the Jamahiriya's expanding

petrochemicals industry. The new university will include faculties of petroleum and electronics.

The latest step in the expansion of Benghazi's Gar Yonis University came in March this year with the award of a \$82.4 million contract to South Korea's Daewoo Development Corporation to build a faculty of science. It was also reported that the company had a letter of intent for the construction of a \$40.2 million dormitory extension and a \$19.5 million printing complex.

In April the Austrian firm Voest-Alpine was reported to have won a \$7.8 million contract to set up a vocational training centre to be linked to the Misrata steelworks. The centre will have a workshop, fully equipped with machine tools, and classrooms for 240 trainees. The contract also provided for 46 Libyans to be trained by the firm in Linz.

It was announced in June that Energo-projekt of Yugoslavia had won a \$220 million contract to build the Jamahiriya's first merchant navy college. Scheduled for completion in three years, the new college will accommodate 400-600 undergraduate students and 100 post-graduates.

The continuing scope for enhancing the Jamahiriya's own training facilities was amply demonstrated by the announcement in May that 480 Libyans are to receive training in telecommunications in Greece. They will attend colleges run by the state-owned Hellenic Telecommunications Organisation, which under an earlier agreement had already undertaken to train 200 Libyan students.

►steelworks has been the subject of a particularly valuable string of contracts awarded since the beginning of the year.

The largest single contract so far awarded has been won by Japan's Kobe Steel, who recently confirmed that they have a \$751 million contract for a bar and wire rod mill, a section mill and other facilities. The order includes the supply of desalination plants, oxygen production plants, a test centre and the central control centre. Kobe Steel is also to train Libyans to operate the plant, and will provide technical support after the plant enters operation in 1985.

Another key project in the plan is Libya's first aluminium smelter, to be erected at Zuwara, about 100 kilometres west of Tripoli. In July it was reported that Yugoslavia's Energoinvest has won the \$1,000 million construction contract for the smelter and associated petroleum coke plant. A company spokesman was quoted as saying the industrial complex will include an oil refinery to process 164,000 barrels of oil per annum into petroleum coke and other products, and an electro-

lytic facility to produce about 110,000 tonnes of aluminium per year. Earlier, Italy's Foster Wheeler Italiana had won a \$45 million contract for engineering, procurement and construction supervision for the coke plant.

Petro-chemicals

Petrochemicals schemes are another key area of industrial development. The new plan calls for completion of the major petrochemicals complex already under way at Ras Lanouf, on the coast about mid way between Benghazi and Tripoli, for the expansion of the petrochemicals facilities at Marsa Brega and for the establishment of new plants at the coastal town of Sirte. A major new oil refinery is also to be set up at Misrata.

Developments in agriculture in the past year bode well for the attainment of one of the five year plan's major objectives — to reduce significantly the Jamahiriya's current dependence on food imports. At present, Libya must import about 46 per cent of her food needs, but this figure is planned to fall to 38 per cent by 1985.

The development of industries based on agriculture will mean an even greater reduction of imports of processed foods. It is hoped that by 1985 domestic output will be meeting 35 per cent of demand, compared with the current 27 per cent.

Perhaps even more significant than the sheer size of the funds earmarked for agriculture, or the sector's projected annual growth rate, is the specific call made in the five year plan for renewed emphasis on development in the coastal regions. Since the Revolution, the irrigation schemes established deep in the Sahara, based on the presence of vast quantities of underground water, have attracted much attention in the international media. The new emphasis on coastal development by no means implies that these schemes are to be abandoned, but it seems likely that in the long term their importance will diminish. The redoubling of efforts along the coast makes sound economic sense, since it is there that the majority of Libyans live.

Reflecting the new policy, it was disclosed in March that the Secretariat for

Flying doctor services amongst new schemes



Libya's hospitals: the best possible health care for the people of the Jamahiriya

SINCE THE overthrow of King Idris in 1969, billions of dollars have been invested in an ambitious programme to ensure that health care facilities are available to all the Libyan people. The neglect of the health sector in the years of the monarchy meant that the revolutionary authorities had to build up a health system almost from scratch. Their success has been remarkable. Hospitals and clinics have been set up in all the Jamahiriya's towns, and most of the villages are served by local clinics. By the end of 1980 the number of hospital beds per thousand Libyans had risen to 4.5, up from 3.1 in 1968.

Having created a viable network of hospitals and clinics offering a basic range of health care services, the Jamahiriya has increasingly been turn-

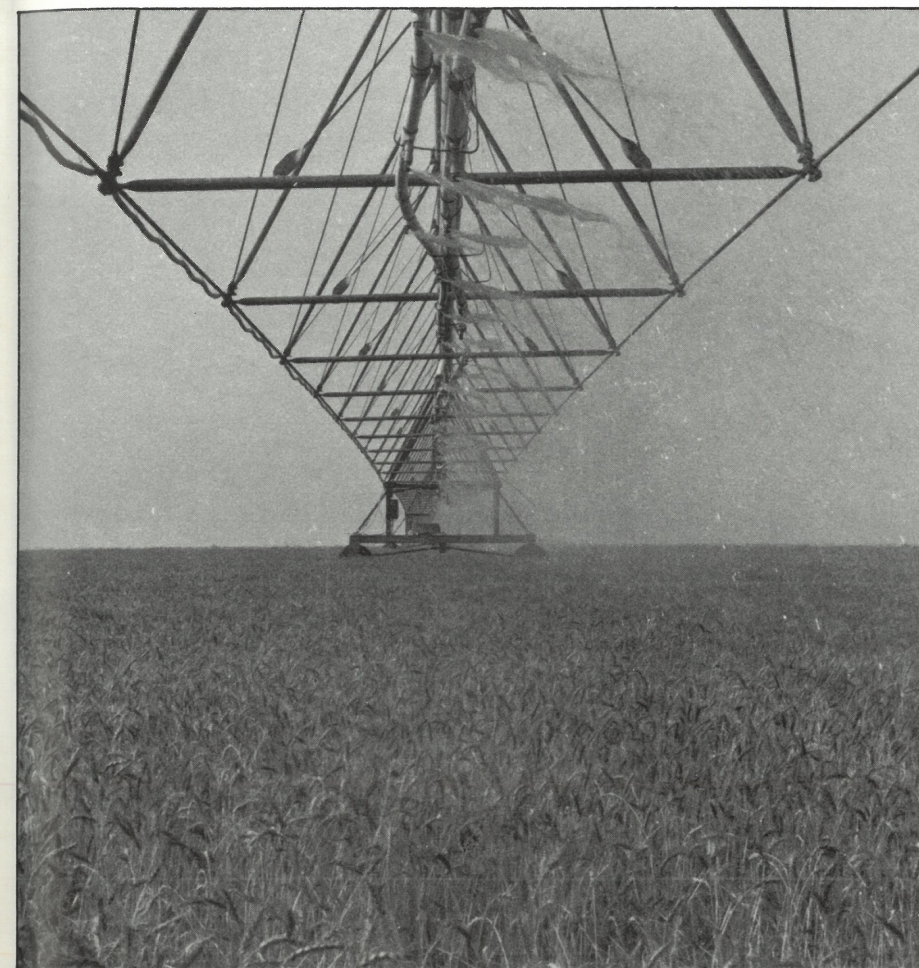
ing to the provision of specialised facilities. The new 1981-85 development plan calls for the establishment of a further 29 hospitals, and while many of these will be general hospitals, a number will be specialist establishments. A 400-bed sanatorium for the mentally handicapped is to be built at Swanee, and in February the Health Secretariat reported that a 1,200-bed mental hospital was under construction in Tripoli. The Libyan capital is also to be the site of a new 500-bed accident surgery hospital, the contract for which has already been signed. The Health Secretariat also reported in February that feasibility studies were under way for two specialised tuberculosis hospitals.

The Libyan Jamahiriya has always had a special commitment to the

physically disabled. Many Libyans have been maimed in accidental detonations of mines and other explosive devices left on Libyan soil by the European armies that fought across the country during the Second World War. In 1977 the United Nations accepted a Libyan proposal that 1981 be designated International Year of the Disabled.

This concern for the disabled is reflected in the continuing efforts to improve facilities for their welfare and rehabilitation. In January this year it was announced that Sweden's Skanska Cementgjuteriet had won a \$74.8 million contract for two rehabilitation centres for the physically disabled, one to be built in Benghazi, the other in Tripoli. Each will have a 10,000 square metre clinic, and will be equipped with an X-ray department, an operating theatre, a rehabilitation workshop, a swimming pool and a canteen. Each centre will be able to serve 150-200 out-patients.

In another development underlining the diversification of Libya's health care facilities, it was announced in March that a 'flying doctor' service would shortly be inaugurated to serve the remotest parts of the country. Already the Health Secretariat has bought three helicopters and two fixed-wing aircraft for the new service, and 30 pilots for the medical aircraft have completed their training. The service will enable doctors to give prompt treatment to serious cases, and allow patients speedy access to hospitals when specialised treatment is required.



Mechanical irrigation installation at work near Kufra

Agrarian Reform and Land Reclamation. had given the green light for the start of data collection for a major project, described as the largest of its type in the world, to pump subterranean water north from the desert for agricultural and domestic use along the coast, where underground water supplies have been over-exploited. Wells will be drilled in the Tazerbo and Sarir regions in the south east of the Jamahiriya, and two million cubic metres of water per annum will be pumped north to Benghazi, Marsa Brega and Sirte for use in the home and to irrigate 50,000 hectares of agricultural land. This use of subterranean water hundreds of kilometres inland to supplement coastal supplies represents a major new departure in Libyan agriculture.

Agro-industry

The most important agricultural contracts awarded since the launch of the new five year plan have been in the field of agro-industry. This is a rapidly expanding area of Libyan agriculture, reflecting the attractiveness of capital intensive schemes where abundant funds for investment are accompanied by limited supplies of labour. The most recent contracts were won by Holland's HVA and the Danish firm Danfarm Contractors. The \$122.2 million HVA contract is for the supply and management of a milk products and poultry processing plant to be sited at Ghat Sultan, near Benghazi. The plant

will produce 9,000 litres of milk per day from 600 cows, and 5.5 million broilers per year. The scheme will have its own animal feed mill, milk processing and bottling plants, a poultry slaughterhouse and a yoghurt making plant. Danfarm Contractors' \$168.4 million contract is for a similar scheme, with an identical planned output, to be sited at Wadi al Hari, south of Tripoli. Earlier, HVA had won a \$129.9 million contract for another agro-industrial project to be located at Taourgha, 60 kilometres south of Misrata. The facilities and projected output are the same as at the other two new schemes.

The new five year plan — with spending set at more than double that of the last national plan — is ambitious by any standards. On the evidence of its first nine months, the prospects for the plan are bright, but undoubtedly the Jamahiriya will encounter similar difficulties in its execution as those faced with the 1976-80 plan. What is encouraging, however, is that Libyans evince a refreshing ability to acknowledge problems, and to take appropriate remedial action. This was well illustrated by Musa Abu Freiwa's frank admission (see inset on technology) that shortages of skilled manpower had hampered the execution of the last plan. Such self-criticism, and a determination to change course when and if necessary, augur well for the Jamahiriya's long-term economic future.

Shop prices cut in retail revolution

ONE OF the key moves in the socialist transformation of the Libyan Jamahiriya came this year with the decision that private shops will be phased out. Their place is being taken by a country-wide network of popularly-owned, multi-storey supermarkets, where Libyans can buy the full range of goods previously available in private shops, but at rock-bottom prices. Low prices are possible because the abolition of private retailing has also meant the end of merchants' profits, which were often out of all proportion to the services they rendered as middlemen. Goods are sold in the people's markets virtually at cost-price.

On 14th March the General People's Committee for Economy announced that following resolutions of the basic people's congresses, ratified by the General People's Congress, the Jamahiriya's legislature, a timetable for the phasing out of private shops had been decided. Textile, shoe and household appliance shops were to close by 28th March, butcher's shops by 30th April and grocery stores by 31st December.

The Libyan people took control of the Jamahiriya's foreign trade some time ago, and the extension of their control over internal trade had long been expected as a natural follow-up.

The opening of two new supermarkets in Tripoli on 23rd March brought the total operational by that date throughout Libya to 225, the Jamahiriya news agency JANA reported. It added that 60 more were scheduled to open shortly, and that construction contracts had been signed for another 185. While the chain of people's markets is operated by the General Markets Company, the activities of each are under the control of a people's economic committee, ensuring democratic supervision of the retail outlets.

To ensure adequate supplies to keep the people's markets well-stocked, the General Markets Company is developing a network of major warehouses. A Finnish company was recently awarded a \$49.3 million contract to build six of these, each to have a floor area of more than 65,000 square metres. For completion next year, the warehouses will serve markets in Tripoli, Benghazi, Derna and Zuwara.

Major redevelopment for Tripoli and Benghazi

BRITAIN'S W S Atkins Group has won an important consultancy contract relating to a scheme to redevelop a 1,457 hectare area in the centre of Tripoli, one of 21 areas scheduled for renewal in the Libyan capital. The UK firm's study is scheduled for completion in 15 months.

Benghazi, the Libyan Jamahiriya's second largest city, is also the scene of major urban development schemes, and in August it was reported that two Japanese firms, Yachiyo Engineering Company and Kisho Kurokawa Architects & Associates, will soon complete a final design draft for the city's largest development project to date. The \$634.5 million scheme entails the transformation of a 110 hectare coastal strip into a tourism and recreational area. Several hotels with recreational facilities, are to be built, as well as new housing. Construction is due to start next year, and should take five years.

Middle East Economic Digest also reported in August that Japanese firms are preparing bids for the construction of a new town near Benghazi, for which tenders are to be called in the autumn.

One of the key urban development projects in Tripoli is the \$230 million Nasser Forest scheme for the establishment of a central park and zoo, and in July it was announced that South Korea's Samsung Construction Company will take over as prime contractor for the project at the end of the year. The scheme is expected to take three years to complete.

Gas processing plant gets go ahead

WORLEY ENGINEERING, the US subsidiary of Britain's William Press & Son, has won a \$4 million design, engineering and management contract for a 100 million cubic foot per day gas processing and condensate recovery plant to be built at Benghazi. The new plant will recover and process gas from the Messla field in central Libya. The first phase of the project, which includes detailed engineering, procurement assistance and inspection, should be completed in one year, although no timetable has been fixed for phase two, covering supply of materials, construction management and commissioning. The contract, awarded by the Benghazi-based Arabian Gulf Oil Company, also



Ports expansion: vital for Libya's future trade

provides for the training of Libyan operating and maintenance staff for the plant.

In the past, the Libyan Jamahiriya's vast reserves of natural gas were exploited only for export in liquid form. Increasingly, however, efforts are being made to make use of the gas either as a fuel or a raw material for industries. For example, the furnaces at the Misrata steelworks will be fired by natural gas from the Hateiba gas field deep in the Sahara.

Recent weeks have seen two other important developments in the Jamahiriya's oil and gas industry. In July it was reported that the Brega Oil Company had awarded South Korea's Samsung Construction Company a \$70.9 million contract to build oil storage tanks and pipelines near Misrata. Work was to start in August, with completion in 20 months. In May it was reported that France's Comsip Entreprise had won a \$3.5 million contract for two computerised process control systems for oil pipelines. The first will be installed for the 520 kilometre line from the Missla and Sarir oilfields to the Ran Lanouf petrochemicals complex. The second is for the oil terminal at Tobruk. The supervisory control and data acquisition systems are expected to be operational by mid-1982. Client is the Arabian Gulf Oil Company.

Brak airport expands

INTERNATIONAL Airports Authority of India (IAAI) and National Building Construction Corporation, both of New Delhi, have a

\$41.9 million contract for the building work involved in the second phase of construction of Brak airport, about 600 kilometres south of Tripoli, it was reported in late July. The work will include lengthening the 3,600 metre runway by 1,300 metres and extending the parking apron. IAAI has successfully completed a \$26.3 million contract for the first phase of the airport.

Benghazi port contract awarded

THE YUGOSLAV concern Ivan Milutinovic Inland Waterways Construction and Engineering Enterprise has been awarded a \$24 million contract for part of the Benghazi port redevelopment project, the Yugoslav news agency Tanjug reported in July. Completion of the contract is scheduled for the end of 1983.

The programme to expand Benghazi port is making good progress, the Jamahiriya news agency reported on 27th March, saying that breakwater No 1 was then 70 per cent completed, the second breakwater was about half finished and that work had begun on the extension of the northern breakwater. Excavation and infill work was also well on schedule, JANA added.

Earlier this year, severe storms in the Mediterranean caused considerable damage to the Jamahiriya's ports and sea walls, but repairs are well under way. In July it was disclosed that, under a \$500,000 contract, Britain's Steel Scaffolding & Piling is to supply 1,000 tonnes of sheet steel piling and other steel com-

modities to repair the storm damage. Delivery was due in late July.

July saw other moves relating to the growing importance to the Jamahiriya of her maritime links.

It was disclosed that Marconi International Marine Company, an affiliate of Britain's GEC-Marconi Electronics, is to fit marine communications equipment in three 9,000 dwt general purpose cargo vessels currently being built for Libya's General National Maritime Transport Company. And it was announced that Anglo-European Container Line has been appointed sole UK agent by Italy's Societa Internazionale Spedizioni for a regular service from Britain to Tripoli.

Methanol output rises

PRODUCTION AT the Marsa Brega methanol plant totalled 179,686 tonnes in the first half of this year, the Jamahiriya News Agency JANA reported on 11th August. This is more than half the 322,233 tonnes produced during the whole of last year, and indicates that the plant is working close to its 1,000 tonnes per day capacity. The success of the plant was underlined in May when JANA reported that it had started operating two shifts per day.

The Marsa Brega methanol plant, opened in 1977, is one of the most modern in the world and only the second of its type to have been set up in Africa. Methanol is the main raw material for the manufacture of proteins for animal fodder.

Japan leads in Libyan vehicle market

JAPAN'S MITSUBISHI Motor Corporation has started shipping 4,620 cars and 4,500 light trucks to Libya. *Middle East Economic Digest* reported on 7th August. This year the firm has won orders from the Jamahiriya for 22,120 vehicles, valued at \$83.3 million.

Earlier, the journal reported that Japan's Sumitomo Corporation has received enquiries about the supply of 30,000 cars and light trucks made by Toyo Kogyo Company. If confirmed, the order would be worth about \$131 million and would be the first large Libyan order for vehicles from Sumitomo or Toyo Kogyo, which markets vehicles under the trade name Mazda.

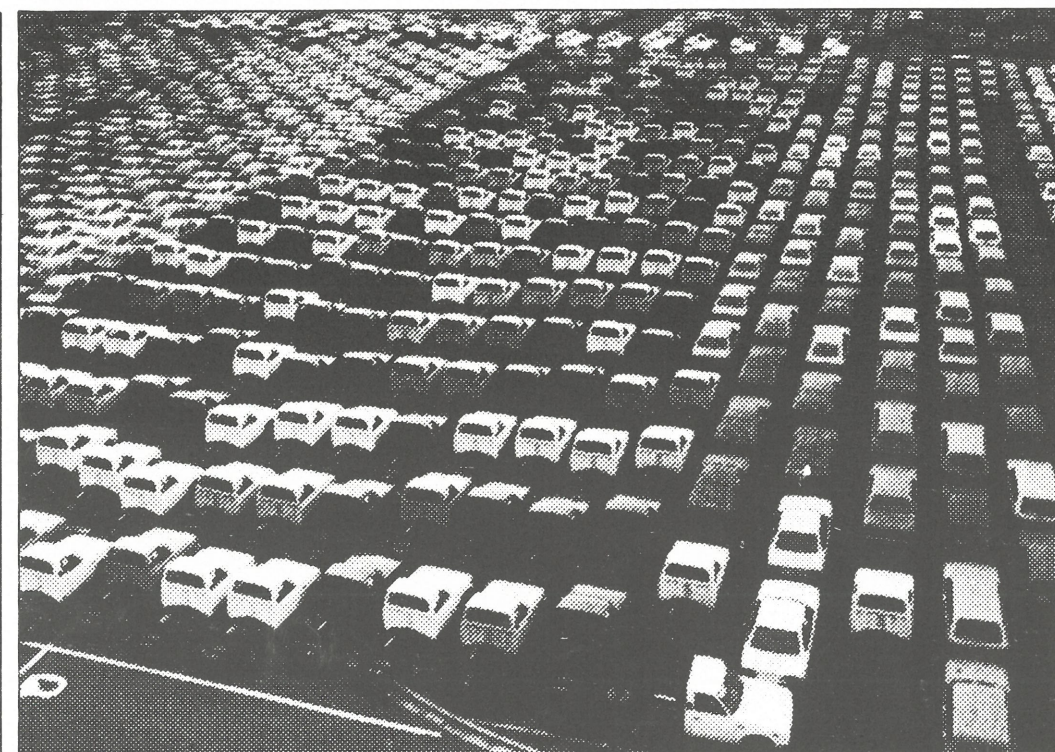
Japanese vehicle exports to the Jamahiriya this year are expected to total 64,000, accounting for 60 per cent of all the vehicles imported by Libya.

Soviet role in Misrata steelworks

PART OF the Libyan-Soviet co-operation agreement recently signed in Moscow by senior Libyan aide Abdel Salam Jalloud provides for the Soviet Union to participate in the second phase of construction of the Jamahiriya's first integrated iron and steel works, currently being established at Misrata, some 150 kilometres east of Tripoli, it was disclosed in July. The co-operation agreement also covers Soviet participation in the development of Libya's oil and gas industries, power stations, water desalination plants and manufacturing projects, including one for the production of drilling equipment.

The Misrata steelworks is a cornerstone of the Jamahiriya's new 1981-85 development plan, which provides for a total expenditure of \$62.5 billion. The \$3,300 million first phase of the works, scheduled for completion by 1985, will give Libya an annual steelmaking capacity of 1.2 million tonnes. The second phase of the project is expected to cost \$1,300 million. For completion by 1991, capacity will be raised to 5 million tonnes. The third and final stage, scheduled for completion by 2005, will give the Misrata works an annual capacity of 7 million tonnes.

The largest single contract so far awarded for the steelworks went to Japan's Kobe Steel, and was valued at \$751 million. In



Japanese vehicles: popular in the Jamahiriya

June it was reported that Kobe had awarded South Korea's Samsung Construction Company a \$130 million subcontract for work at Misrata, and in July came news that Kobe has given a second subcontract to Japan's Taisei Corporation, which will act as engineering and supervision participant between Samsung and Kobe.

\$76 million Tobruk power scheme

BROWN BOVERI of Mannheim, the West German subsidiary of the Swiss engineering company of the same name, has won a \$76 million order for an extension of the oil-fired power station at Tobruk, on the Jamahiriya's north east coast. The work, due for completion in mid-1984, will double the station's capacity to 260 MW.

Three months ago, Brown Boveri won a similar contract for the extension of the Derna power station, also on the north east coast. Both stations incorporate sea water desalination plants.

In another development highlighting the Jamahiriya's efforts to improve her electricity generation and distribution facilities, it was disclosed in July that Brush Power Equipment, a subsidiary of Britain's Hawker Siddely, has a \$7.4 million contract to supply transmission line equipment. The order was placed by Yugoslavia's Energoinvest,

which is acting as purchasing agent for the Jamahiriya's Electrical Projects Company. Twin-spacer dampers are to be supplied for use on about 2,200 kilometres of overhead line being erected along the coast for the Electricity Secretariat. Deliveries have already started, and will continue for about 18 months.

Spacer dampers are used to separate two or more conductors on overhead transmission lines, while at the same time reducing vibration of the lines between the towers.

New cattle for Libyan farms

ABOUT 2,000 cattle were flown to the Jamahiriya between January and the end of March this year by German Cargo Services, a Lufthansa subsidiary. The cattle were carried on 20 flights to Tripoli and ten to Sebha, in the south west. Libya's agricultural development programme emphasises the production of high protein foods, particularly through a major expansion of agro-industries. Recent weeks have seen the conclusion of a number of major contracts providing for the establishment of agro-industrial projects which will produce milk and milk products.

Perhaps the best-known of the Jamahiriya's agro-industrial schemes is that established at Kufra, deep in the Sahara in the south east, where underground water is used to irrigate cereals, and fodder crops for sheep. On 15th July the Jamahiriya news

agency JANA reported that local firms had been contracted to drill ten additional water wells at Kufra, which will take eight months to complete.

In July it was reported that Warsaw-based Polservice Koseki has won a \$55 million-plus contract for survey work and mapping in the Jamahiriya, with completion in five years. The Polish firm has already done similar work in Libya, but on a smaller scale. The contract reflects the determination of the Jamahiriya that her rural development programme should be based on the full range of essential data. Earlier this year Finland's Finmap company won a \$6.5 million contract to prepare cartographic surveys and draw up a 20 year land use plan for a 700,000 square kilometre area in the south of the Jamahiriya.

Libyan loan to Yugoslavia

THE JAMAHIRIYA'S Central Bank has extended a \$150 million seven-year loan to Yugoslavia to help finance her expected 1981 balance of payments deficit of \$1,800 million. The loan follows the conclusion of a bilateral Libyan-Yugoslavian co-operation agreement signed by senior Libyan aide Abdel Salam Jalloud at the end of a three-day visit to Belgrade. Yugoslavia wants to borrow just over \$2 billion this year to finance its deficit and top up her foreign currency reserves. In June it was announced that Kuwait-based banks were to lend the country \$250 million.



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